

Encounter

May 1974 35p

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Laurence Lerner

A Kind of Family Reunion

IN A WAY, the reason I went back to South Africa was because of this girl in the Post Office. She's probably not working for the Post Office any more: if I were the Postmaster General, she wouldn't have lasted five minutes. Even though my handwriting is so bad, that was no excuse for her.

I had written this letter to this friend in Southampton. There's nothing unusual in that, is there, you don't have to come from Southampton or even from England to write letters there. All right, I realise now that Southampton is one word, but you can't know everything. And I used an airmail envelope, it was all I had, and I thought they can always send it by train, can't they, and anyway there are probably aeroplanes that go to Southampton. But the girl thought it said South Africa, and she weighed it and said, nine shillings; and I thought she meant nine shillings for all my letters so I pushed over the money, and before I knew what was happening she had pushed the stamps down on her sponge and was groping for my letter to stick them on.

"Hey," I said, "what're all those stamps for?"

"They're for your letter. I told you nine shillings."

"Are you mad?" I said. "Nine shillings to take a letter two hundred miles."

"What d'you mean, two hundred miles? It's six thousand miles. I know, because my auntie lives there." She settled her hand on her chin and smiled at me. I was invited to ask about the auntie, if I wanted to.

"Where do you think that letter's going?" I asked.

"South Africa. God, don't tell me you don't want air mail. It's an air mail envelope."

"You've stuck my stamps on," I said. "You're not supposed to do that. It's against the post office regulations."

"It is too," she said, still leaning on her hand and curling her lip in casual disgust. "I forgot all about that. I'm new here."

"I can see that," I said. "My letter's going to Southampton."

"Oh God," she said. "Then it only costs sixpence. Eightpence first class."

"You've stuck the stamps on," I said. "Who's going to pay for them?"

"You haven't written very clearly, have you? I mean, that looks like an A, not an H. Anyway, it should be one word."

"I never write letters to South Africa," I said.

"Well, I don't see why not. There's plenty of interesting people there. You shouldn't have all these prejudices."

I saw we were in for an argument. For *the* argument, in fact. I liked the way the girl pushed out her lower lip when she smiled: there was a touch of fight in her. I thought, all right, I'll play her game for a bit. "I don't buy South African fruit," I said.

"It's all prejudice. I bet you buy Spanish fruit. I bet you'd buy Russian fruit, if it came. You're just being fashionable."

She wasn't fashionable at all. She had short hair and nice even teeth, and this square jaw, as if she was still fighting for woman's rights. I decided to make another move in the argument. "I was born in South Africa," I said.

"Well, then, you ought to know better. You oughtn't to have all these prejudices."

"Why don't you come and have some coffee," I said. "I mean, you're not much use to the post office, are you?"

"My auntie says South Africa's all right. She says the natives don't complain." She leaned her head further forward and looked at me. "You've got a cheek," she said. "Anyway, it's my lunch hour in ten minutes."

So I took her to lunch. She was a student, but her opinions were just as unfashionable

as her face. She didn't believe in politics, she thought any government was all right if you just knew how to live under it.

"You ought to take more trouble over the stamps," I said.

She explained it wouldn't really matter if she got sacked from the post office, she had all these books to read anyway. There wasn't time to read at work, with customers coming in all the time, and she'd been ticked off once for reading a book under the counter. "I don't see why it was so terrible," she said. "Even if you don't see the customers, they've got tongues, haven't they?"

"In South Africa," I said, "the whites use one post office, and the coloureds have to go to another one, at the back."

"You've got South Africa on the brain. I don't think it's such a bad place. All these things you read in the papers—my auntie says she's never seen any natives being shot in the streets."

"That's wonderful, isn't it? That proves what a marvellous country it is."

"I think you're full of prejudice, I want to go to South Africa, I want to see for myself." She really was very attractive, the way she pushed out her lower lip after she'd spoken. "You ought to go too, it might be quite different from what you imagine. You might have remembered it all wrong."

"I think you're the one who's got South Africa on the brain," I said.

"But I don't keep talking about it. I don't keep picking on it."

THE TRUTH IS, I hadn't thought about South Africa for five years. I left seven years ago, and for the first two years I thought about it all the time. I'd decided I was coming to England to meet the English, and all I mixed with was other South Africans who'd decided they were coming to England to meet the English. In the end, I took a job in Manchester: I thought surely there couldn't be any South Africans there. Then I got a girl friend in Manchester, and about that time my mother died, so I didn't need to write home: there was only my brother Stanley, growing richer and richer by selling cheap china and linen to the coloureds. Stanley always believed in South Africa. "Man, it's the country of the future," he said

when I left. "You're mad to go away." And it's true enough, there was I in Manchester earning enough for a week in Spain every year, and there was Stanley doing the grand tour whenever he wanted to—he flew over to England to watch the moon landings, because they haven't got television in South Africa. Stanley doesn't need television in South Africa. Anyway, he stayed, and he bought a business, and then another, and he built himself a palace somewhere on the side of Table Mountain. We didn't write very much, after mother died, just on birthdays, briefly. I certainly wouldn't have spent nine shillings on a letter to Stanley.

But the very next day, I got one from him. He often gets his wife Laura to write on my birthday, but this year he wrote himself, and it was the longest letter I'd ever had from him. It was seven years now, he said, why didn't I come back. I would lose touch with my birthplace and with my kin. Stanley was never much good at letter-writing: either he just wrote facts (such as, this time, how much the fare was to South Africa, and that he would pay it), or else he grew eloquent. I'll swear he used the word "kin."

I took the letter and went back to the Post Office. I had called there when I was shopping the previous day, and had forgotten how far away it was. I had to take two buses, and by the time I got there it was after one. The girl was just coming out of the door.

"Hello," I said, "where are you going?"

"I'm going to lunch, of course." She didn't seem at all surprised to see me.

"Well, I'm coming with you. I've just got a letter from my brother."

"I'll pay for myself today, thanks."

"He wants me to go back to South Africa."

"Don't you like Manchester? This way, and mind the bus."

I panted after her. "Why're you in such a hurry?" I asked.

"I've only got half an hour," she said. "I don't want to be late."

"Does it matter if you're late?"

She didn't slow down. "I'm going in here." And she disappeared into the self-service.

When we had sat down, I said, "You've changed since yesterday."

"So have you. You didn't say you had a brother."

"Well, most people have, haven't they?"

"Is he in South Africa, then?"

I nodded.

"Well, you'll be writing letters there, won't you?"

"He wants me to go back."

"For ever."

"For a visit."

"Well, that's all right, isn't it? It'll be a kind of family reunion."

"He offers to pay my fare."

"You'd see your birthplace. How long is it since you left?" Stanley had used words like "birthplace" too.

"I don't know if I ought to go," I said; then I waited for her to tell me that of course I ought to. But she had changed, since yesterday. "You'll probably stay, when you get there," she said.

"I won't stay. I wouldn't dream of staying." And again I waited, for her to tell me I was prejudiced; but she didn't say anything.

After a while she stood up. "I have to go," she said. "I'll be late."

"It doesn't matter if you're late, does it?"

"I've decided not to get sacked."

"So," I said, "you believe in the Post Office now."

She shook her head. "I want the money. My boy friend wants me to go to Russia with him."

And at that moment I decided I would go. She could go to Russia with her boy friend; I would go to Cape Town for a sort of family reunion. I would use up all my holiday and as much as I could of Stanley's money. I would see my birthplace, and my kin, and my kith too (Laura was kith, I supposed). And I would see whether I had remembered it all right.

THE MOMENT THE PLANE touched the ground, my heart turned over. Something had been building up for twenty-four hours, as I watched Mont Blanc looming dangerously out of mist, then the coast of North Africa tacked to the bright sea, then long hours of darkness till I saw the rivers disappearing miscellaneously into the Ovangumbo swamp. I had never seen any of it before, but it all built up into the instant of recognition, of sudden unexpected familiarity, as I got out of the plane into the wide warm indistinct air and told myself this space, these new airport

buildings, were Cape Town.

There was a crush of impatient travellers waiting for their luggage, and Africans in baggy overalls carrying it to the counter. The man next to me saw his suitcase and shouted "Hey!" But the African didn't hear him, and carried it to the other end of the counter. We turned to each other and spoke simultaneously. "Hard luck," I said. "Bloody kaffir," he said.

I was back, and there was Stanley, a little balder, a little plumper, and very much richer. He worked my hand up and down with more energy than he'd ever bestowed on me before, then led me to a spotless cream Mercedes. "Stanley," I said, "where's your Morris Minor?"

Stanley laughed. "I've had three cars since then," he said. Then, as I opened the door, "This is South Africa, man. It's booming."

Yes, I was back. I was pleased to see Stanley, in a way, I was pleased to see Laura and the kids I hadn't yet met, but I was back all right. I could see the days of eating and arguing looming ahead, I would lie in the sun in Stanley's garden and stare through the trees at the mountain, I would listen to him saying, You did right to come, man, it's lucky I've got the dough, you must come again, you must come more often.

"What made you decide to come, in the end?" asked Laura.

"What do you mean, what made him? It's natural enough, isn't it? To visit his family. For a reunion."

"What made you decide to come?" Laura asked again. I saw she'd worked out her way of getting on with Stanley.

It was going into the post office in Swan Street, Manchester, that had made me come back, and if Laura had been alone I might have told her that. But I couldn't say it to Stanley, he would look puzzled and want explanations, or he would start building up the girl (Russia? Boy friend? You're slow man, slow). Yet it was true, really; just as it was going into the post office in Claremont, Cape Town, that sent me back again.

We were on the way to the office. Stanley had taken me in three times already, he had shown me every department, he had introduced me to his partner and to most of the clerks. "I tell you, man," he kept on saying, "we're doing a service here. We're making

money, but we're doing a service. Think of all the families who earn fifteen rand a week, they can't afford to pay fancy prices for towels, they get them cheap from us, the quality isn't any worse than you get in England." He picked up a towel and tried to tear it in half. "See that," he said, "I can't. Japanese. They make good towels, the Japanese. And the Indians. I wouldn't buy English stuff, I wouldn't touch it. The Japanese now"—he thrust his finger at me—"they're non-Europeans, aren't they? They trade with us, they got no prejudices, man."

It was obvious what Stanley was after. He was trying to persuade me to stay and work for him. He and Laura must have worked it all out, they must have talked about it for weeks, he must have had it in mind when he asked me. So at meals Laura would talk about family feeling, and settling down, and had I got a girl in England, no, really not? And Stanley would laugh at the English climate (Manchester? Can you see the sky there?) and ask me when I'd last seen a proper game of Rugby, and how much did I earn (You're joking—is that all?); and when lunch was over he would say, Come on, jump in the car and come down to the office with me. Bring your trunks, and we'll go to the beach afterwards. And if I hesitated he said There's another department I want you to see.

He kept on about his coloured staff. "You ask them," he said. "Ask them when I'm not there. Go on, you ask them if they're satisfied. You think they'd change for England? They've all got cars, they all earn a hundred rand a month. I don't need to employ white staff."

Stanley wasn't very subtle. The only subtlety was that he wasn't actually going to make the offer until I'd been talked round. He and Laura must have agreed that. They were obviously sure I would refuse at first. I suppose I would have; or perhaps I wouldn't even have resisted. Perhaps I'd have looked up and seen the heat haze over Table Mountain, and said What the hell am I doing in Manchester?

But he never asked; and so I never said yes. It all came of our walking down to the office instead of driving. It was Laura's suggestion: "Take some exercise," she said, "I'll bet you never walk to work in Manchester." Actually I do: it's Stanley who doesn't, because the

path leads through a coloured district. But I liked Laura, and so I didn't say anything. I think it was Laura's idea that they ask me in the first place: she wanted to do something for her brother-in-law. Laura has a strong family feeling; and if she hadn't suggested we walk, or if she hadn't been so clever and told Stanley, don't ask him yet, not till he's come round to the idea, then no doubt I'd have stayed, and she'd have married me off to one of her old school friends.

It was twenty-five minutes' walk to the office. The streets were full of ragged bustle, the shopfronts were crowded with fruit, piles of slender white grapes, or full black ones so big they were worth peeling, red, blue or golden plums, melons that went to your head if you bent to smell them. I would buy a pound of grapes, I said to myself, I would spit the pips on to the hot pavement as I walked along.

I didn't do so, because Stanley has grown so respectable. He was wearing a suit, and he didn't want me to eat in the street. "You can eat grapes at home," he said. "You can send a boy out for them when we get to the office. The best haneport, he'll get you."

HE KEPT HURRYING me. He walked for exercise, not because he liked the streets. The grey shape of Table Mountain loomed in the grey sky, a pale featureless outline in the heat. When I pointed it out he nodded and walked on.

I felt irritated. "There's the post office," I said. "I need some stamps." I wanted to slow him down.

"I've got stamps in the office, come on."

"I have to know how much it costs," I said. "Won't be a minute."

"For God's sake," said Stanley. "How do you think I got where I am? I never go into a post office. I pay clerks for that. We have machines in the office for that."

"Do you mind, Stanley," I said. "I want to go into the post office. You don't have to come." And I crossed the road and went in through the dark opening without looking round. The dull orange paint was peeling from the outside wall, two Africans with torn shirts were leaning against the door. It was quite dark inside, after the dazzle outside. I was fumbling in my pocket for the letters, and

trying to see the counter, when I heard Stanley's voice. "Hey, man" he called out in an urgent whisper. It was a whisper from twenty years ago. Hey, man, he used to call, when we were stealing watermelons, or cool drinks out of the fridge, Hey, man, someone's coming. I had never expected to hear that call again, I had forgotten it existed. It frightened me now, coming into the sudden darkness, pulling me back suddenly to a bright, hazy past. I stopped still, but did not turn round.

"Hey, man," said the voice again, calling my name this time. "You idiot, come back."

I realised that Stanley could not see me. He had seen me go in, and all he knew was that I was somewhere there, in the dark. I turned round and looked out. There he was, leaning forward, as if there was a fence across the door, holding him back. As I instantly realised, there was.

"What is it?" I called back.

"Don't be a fool," he hissed. "Come out."

"I just want to post my letters," I said. "Do you want some stamps?"

"Stop acting the goat. You've gone into the non-Europeans."

"So what?" I said. It was a silly thing to say. I can only have said it to annoy Stanley.

"Stop being a bloody fool, man, you're in Cape Town now, you don't have to pretend." There were three or four people in the post office, and two clerks, and they were all listening to Stanley. There was not more than two yards separating us, but the distance was uncrossable: we were separated by my seven years in England and Stanley's pride that he had stuck to his home. To cross that gap, for Stanley, would have meant to give up his success, his investments, his acceptances. He might as well have emigrated.

"Master," said one of the Africans to me, "I think the baas is calling you."

I nodded vaguely. "He's my brother," I said.

"If he's your brother, master, you better go. You better go outside." I thought it was a friendly remark, but of course it could have been a threat. I couldn't tell from the way it was said, I'd been away too long.

I didn't buy my stamps. I suppose if I'd wanted to make a stand, on principle, I should have stayed and done so; but whatever I did now I would get a lecture from Stanley,

so I thought I might as well come straight out and get it over with, come out when I was full of things to say to him in return. And perhaps I was embarrassed at the thought of buying stamps at the non-European counter: what if the coloured clerk refused to serve me? With Stanley waiting outside?

So out I went, to have my row with Stanley: an intense, whispered row, with a few dozen coloured men and Africans standing round, more or less listening. I saw the sweat start up on Stanley's forehead, I saw him draw his lips back from his teeth as he hissed at me.

The fact that there was an audience gave me an advantage. It was much worse for him to be seen than it was for me. Some of them might even work for him (I wondered vaguely if he would know them if they did). "What the hell do you think you're doing," Stanley hissed: I saw that he was furious. "What funny business do you think you're up to?"

"What's all the fuss about?" I said.

"Be your age, man, don't come over us with all this English cock. You saw that was the non-Europeans' entrance."

"You think I go round looking what it says on the entrance? You think I've got nothing better to think about than colour prejudice and stupid regulations?"

"Very fine, aren't you? Very lahdidah, coming back from England. You knew that was a non-European entrance."

YES, IN A WAY I had known. I hadn't seen, but I hadn't much wanted to see. I suppose really I could have let Stanley post my letters at his office, it would have made him feel good to pay for them, to show he didn't care what he paid for. It had been me who'd insisted on going in.

"I knew there'd be something like this," said Stanley. "I told Laura. I knew you'd bring some nonsense back with you."

"Stanley," I said, "let me tell you something. The day I arrived in England I was walking in a park. There was a bench, with a notice on it. The very day I arrived, I tell you. And I wasn't even thinking, I just took it for granted the notice would say Europeans only. And as I walked past I looked, and you know what it said?"

Stanley wasn't even listening. "It said: FOR ONE AND ALL. I've never got over that,

that a bench could say For one and all. Can you imagine that here?"

"Just to show South Africa isn't good enough for you," said Stanley. He hadn't heard a word I said.

"I don't have to accept all your prejudices," I said, "just because I'm staying with you."

"You don't have to shout." Stanley had in fact kept his voice down, he had delivered everything in an intense low hiss that none of the passers-by could hear. They could see his fury, though, both hands were thrust in his pockets, but the fists were knotted, the muscles vivid. "Come away," he hissed, "we can argue somewhere else."

I held up my letters, with a gesture that was more casual, I suppose, than it needed to be. "I have to post these," I said.

"For God's sake, you can post them at the office. Stop being a bloody fool." Stanley looked up: there were about forty people watching us now. One huge African, he looked nearly seven feet, his shirt was almost in rags, turned to his neighbour and said something in Xhosa—or in Zulu, or Sotho, or one of their languages. They both laughed, a deep male laugh, full (it seemed to me) of sunlight and contempt. I saw Stanley's muscles tighten again. "I see you haven't changed," he hissed. "You still think you're so clever."

I started to cross the road again. "I'm coming," I said over my shoulder, "just as soon as I've posted these." I felt I'd be giving in to Stanley if I didn't post them.

THE EUROPEAN ENTRANCE was wider, its paint wasn't peeling, there was nobody leaning against the wall. Inside I could make out the counter, faintly, and I realised, and then I was ashamed to realise, that I felt more comfortable now. I wasn't so sure, after all, that I was winning a victory by going in; I saw that Stanley could consider that a victory for him—but I saw too that he wouldn't, not after the ragged black giant and his deep laugh that had set my teeth on edge. Nothing I could do now would be a victory for Stanley, even if I came along to the office immediately he would go on complaining all afternoon. And I wasn't coming along, I was going to post my letters.

"Just a minute." A hand landed on my

shoulder, so heavily that I found myself thinking immediately, something is wrong, something is going to happen. "Hey, just a minute." It was such a strong Afrikaans accent that I wanted to laugh: it was only in jokes that I heard accents like that, nowadays.

"Where do you think you're going?" I twisted round, but the hand held firm; my head was turned, my body twisted, and I was looking at a policeman, almost as tall as the African who laughed. But he was not in rags, and there was no sunshine in his voice.

"That's the European entrance. You blerrywell go to your own side."

I could not think of anything to say. All I could think of was to turn round and look at him. I tried to free my shoulder, so as to turn round and face him directly, but his grip was very tight. If I tried to jerk away and failed I would have had a fight, and lost; so I just went on looking at him, my head twisted awkwardly. I didn't look into his eyes (he would have outstared me in ten seconds) but at his huge, gross nose.

"Go, voetsak," he said. "Go on, get to your own side." And he tried to push me. I saw just in time what he was going to do, and resisted. He pushed out his lip, showing his lower teeth, and I thought he was going to hit me. Instead he turned round to the crowd of coloured watchers, who had left Stanley, and were all watching us now. "Get to hell away," he shouted at them. "Voetsak, all you blerry koelies. You want me to get a sjambok?"

The crowd had more respect for him than I had, and though nobody ran away they all retreated. They reformed across the street, further away and fewer in number.

I had been able to slip away from under his hand when he turned round, and now I was back against the wall, feeling the slight roughness of the plaster sticky under my hand. I still had not spoken, and I was embarrassed what to say. The obvious thing was, that I was white, but that was the one thing I didn't want to say. I didn't want to show the policeman had made a mistake.

"Listen I give you twenny seconds to get the hell round to your own side. You go or you come blerrywell back to the police station with me. And I tell you, you won't like that." He looked round to make sure he had an audience to appreciate what he said, but that

it was far enough away to be deferential. "I saw you come out of the non-Europeans, now you trying to get fresh, coming in the white man's entrance. Don' you try any of your blerrynonsense on me."

I SAW I'D HAVE to say something. To stand still and be taken off to the police station seemed silly, to slink away was mere defeat, so I would have to say something. I thought of saying that I was against the colour bar, but I knew I didn't have the nerve. I thought of saying "I'm European: I come from Europe", but it would be lost on that policeman. I thought of a few wild things, such as asking the policeman if he was white. In the end, I didn't have to say anything after all.

"Excuse me," said Stanley's voice. "Excuse me, what's the matter?"

If he'd said "Excuse me, constable," everything might have been cleared up. I don't see why I should want Stanley to grovel any more than me, but if he'd said it, there'd have been no more trouble.

The policeman turned on him. "You keep out of this, man," he said.

"I beg your pardon," said Stanley, looking straight at the policeman. Stanley was good at looking people in the eye, I saw; but it didn't help him this time.

"I'm telling this koelie to go the non-European side, if you want to know. I don't want no interference from you neither."

I saw Stanley turn his head to me, hesitate, then decide to say nothing. "It's all right," he said to the policeman, "he's my brother. It's all right."

Stanley was someone who stood for no nonsense, I saw. I suppose that's true of most rich men. But the manner that worked in his office wasn't working on this policeman. Stanley is even darker than I am, and people in Manchester, when they hear I am from South Africa, sometimes think I'm coloured. He was wearing a smart suit, of course, but that didn't help—it was a bit too smart, in fact. Stanley always had a taste for loud clothes.

"You can have six blerry brothers I don't care," shouted the policeman. 'Jus you don' interfere, hey."

"Now listen to me, constable," said

Stanley. He said "constable" now, but it was too late. "I shall take your number, and if I have any impudence I'll report you."

I think after that the policeman must have known Stanley was white; he can't have thought a coloured man would talk like that. But he'd gone too far to draw back. "There's my number," he bellowed, turning one shoulder to Stanley. "There, go on, write it down." And he jerked his shoulder forward, on to Stanley's jaw. I think Stanley must have been leaning forward just at that instant, perhaps to read it. There was a faint but clear click, and then he was sprawling on the pavement. The policeman seized my elbow—he had a hand like a piece of machinery—and pulled me towards him. "Come on," he shouted, "come along with me."

Stanley got up with words pouring out of him. "I'll summon you for assault," he shouted. "I won't stand for this, bloody ignorant rooinek policeman." It was the sort of rage Stanley used to have against Dad when he was alive; I hadn't seen one since he was 12, and hadn't ever expected to see one again. "Who do you think you are?" he shouted. "Blackveld ape. Plaasjapie." There are plenty of insults for rural Afrikaners, and I was afraid Stanley was starting on a long list, that would end with him on the pavement again. But without a pause or a change of tone he turned on me. "And you, you think you're clever, you think you're bloody clever, you come here with your overseas nonsense, you think you can go in any door you like, you think you're too good for South Africa, don't you, well I tell you we don't need you, we don't need your sort back here, you're not doing us any favours."

He was more angry with me than with the policeman; and I think the policeman must have realised by then that I was Stanley's brother, and that I was white too. Looking back, I see he had to decide then whether to let us go, or bluster it out; what he did was really a way of avoiding the decision.

The circle of coloured watchers had come closer and grown thicker by then. The policeman suddenly blew his whistle: it screeched right next to my ear. Then he took hold of his baton and started hitting. He missed me but he hit Stanley, who went down on the pavement again. Then he moved into the crowd. There was a knot and an eddy,

then the natives started running in all directions. I saw him, in sudden slow motion, it seemed, hit a large old shapeless black woman. I wondered why the whistle had started up again, but further away now; then I realised there were two other policemen coming. He must have seen them, or known they would be there.

The black giant who had laughed at us was running straight towards me. His face was twisted with hatred, or fear or even laughter, I couldn't tell, and he was running straight at me, terrifyingly. It must have been panic, since he was running straight at the policeman too. He couldn't have seen him; the policeman simply waited, as if he was protecting me, then when the African was two yards away he hit him. He ran straight into the blow; there was a dull, satisfying thud, the African stopped dead, then he started to go backwards, half-falling, half-walking, right into one of the two approaching policemen.

That African was the worst sufferer of all. Stanley's suit was ruined but he wasn't hurt; both of us were taken to the police station but we didn't stay long. Stanley insisted on phoning a lawyer, as soon as he got there, and surprisingly they let him. As soon as the lawyer came they let us go, so that the only thing he had to do was to drive us home. I think they intended all the time to let us go, and only kept us so that the lawyer's time would be wasted.

In fact, we even got a kind of apology—or Stanley did. The policeman had after all committed the basic offence, he had mistaken a white man for a coloured man. His only way of admitting it had been to beat up a few coloured men, and once that was done he could let us go. "Mr Everitt," said the station sergeant to Stanley, "I'm sorry about all this, hey. It's a misunderstanding, you see. But you must tell your brother, Mr Everitt" (I was standing two feet away from him, but he pretended I couldn't speak, or couldn't hear), "you must tell your brother, he better be more careful in future. This is South Africa, man, we have to be careful." He paused, then decided to conciliate Stanley a bit more. "You know that, man, don't you?"

"You think I haven't told him?" said Stanley.

"I mean, they got their own problems now

in England, haven't they? With all these immigrants now, it's not so easy to be kaffir-boeties, is it?" And he smiled at Stanley, the smile of an ally. He surely despised Stanley as a money-maker, a newcomer, an atheist, an Englishman, but he now offered himself as an ally, for Stanley was a South African, and he had a brother who'd gone away and decided South Africa wasn't good enough for him. And as I watched, Stanley took the offer.

"Yes," he admitted, "They're starting to have trouble there."

"You just tell your brother, Mr Everitt, you just tell him to take all his ideas back to England. We got no time for them here. We know how to handle the natives, we don't want no advice from overseas."

WHY DON'T YOU TELL me yourself, I wanted to say. I even made a slight sound in my throat, preparing to say it, when I realised that he had not spoken a word to me, and that that was why we were getting off so easily. There had been no argument. The sergeant had had his say, but only in the form of helping Stanley. And then I realised I had said nothing, nothing at all, from the first moment the policeman had crashed his hand on my shoulder. I don't think either Stanley or the policeman noticed this, and I realised it would be best not to point it out. If I kept quiet than I would be treated as Stanley's brother, as part of the cross he had to bear, and Stanley would be treated as a South African.

So they used up none of their white man's anger on me. They used it on the huge African instead. His head was streaming blood, his few rags of shirt were torn off him, even before he was brought into the police station; and he got no apology, I'm sure. Once we were inside, I saw no more of him; for the police station, like the Post Office, had its non-European entrance, and nobody made a mistake about that one, nobody.

"There was a lot of trouble in the street, your brother started it off," said the sergeant to Stanley. "We can't have too much of that either." I still said nothing, even when we got back to Stanley's house and he was going over it all to Laura, bunching his fingers with indignation on each sentence, I

still didn't point out that it was the policeman who'd started the trouble, after all. And of course Stanley didn't point it out either; he just nodded while the policeman spoke, not saying anything, I have to admit, but still nodding. Stanley never could keep his head still.

"We'll take care of it," said the sergeant. "We know how to put a stop to that nonsense." It wasn't till we got home that I realised what he meant: that the African would be beaten up. I hadn't heard anything, of course, I didn't even know where the non-European section was, but I saw in the jaw and the ears of that sergeant what was going to happen. They wouldn't kill him, but they would beat him up very thoroughly; there was plenty of blood in that native, and they'd get a good deal of it out of him, those white policemen. They'd beat him up for getting in the way of the baton, for wearing a ragged shirt, for laughing at me in Xhosa. Above all for laughing at me.

I didn't even feel angry. I'd hated that big African for a few moments, when I'd seen him laughing and I couldn't understand; I'd hated him as much as I'd hated the policeman, and in much the same way. South Africa belonged to them, to one or other of them, and they would fight it out, in police stations and in the streets, for years to come. Neither of them needed me; they didn't even need Stanley. He was useful for his Japanese towels, but they were doing him a favour

when they treated him as an ally.

From Stanley's living room you can see a corner of Table Mountain. There are two tall bluegum trees at the bottom of the garden, and behind their pale bark was the hazy sky, tiny clouds drifting and disappearing into the flat blue heat, and then the square block of darker grey that was the mountain. There was nothing but heat and space to be seen, and in front the silky, slender trunks of the bluegums. "You knew it was the wrong door," Stanley was saying, "you're not such a fool." The tall leaves swaying lazily as Stanley filled the room with his anger.

"You ought to have some consideration, you know," said Laura gently. She was gentle, but of course she supported Stanley's anger. "You've been away a long time, you can't expect—"

I was more or less listening. They would both go on for a long time, they would say everything over and over again, it didn't matter if I missed it the first time. It was those two swaying trees I had come back for, not Stanley's anger. It was the square shape of Table Mountain, grey and indistinct in the heat, not Laura's reasonable voice. The price of the family reunion was that anger and that reasonableness, and I didn't intend to pay it. I didn't have many more days to look out of that window, and I wanted to learn the landscape thoroughly before I went back to the very different haze of Manchester.

A Rubbing

Rising air disturbs the drapes.
Blinds tap as the sun bears down.
At home, we want to free our clothes
but there are open doors. Ascending

stairs, I pass another girl, this
one coming from a white surround
and caught by an inscription
at her waist. With nothing more below

this dark maiden sways; her tresses
float, her bodice undulates
and turns. I stop her movement,
touching where the heart would be.

David Day

E. J. Mishan

The New Inflation

Its Theory & Practice

THE UNENDING DEBATE on the causes of inflation ranges from explanations of pure "demand pull" (or excess spending) to those depending exclusively on the notion of "cost push" (excessive pay claims). There is always a temptation to make judicious statements about the need for a realistic view of the phenomenon to contain elements of both theories. Yet it is a fact that among professional economists, certainly among academic economists, the debates on inflation tend to cluster about the "demand-pull" end of the spectrum.

This is understandable for two related reasons. All known inflations, both in modern and ancient history, have apparently been of the "demand-pull" variety and (as Professor Milton Friedman reminds us from time to time) such inflations are easiest to explain in terms of unusual expansions of the supply of money. The other reason is that only a "demand-pull" explanation fits comfortably into traditional economic theories of price and income determination. All such theories favour classical liberal remedies that preclude "direct" government intervention and tend to favour monetary and fiscal policies which act "indirectly" on the economy at large.

What of the differences of opinion and doctrine among professional economists themselves? They have turned on the relative importance of the effect on aggregate money income of, on the one hand, changes in overall expenditure, and of changes in the overall supply of money on the other. These differences in theory are translatable into differences in policy that emphasise, respectively, fiscal controls and mone-

tary controls. Since British governments over the last few years have been increasing the supply of money at an annual rate of anything up to 30% and, in the last two years in particular, have been running sizable budgetary deficits, the inflationary outcome is consistent with both versions of the "demand-pull" theory. The statistical evidence is insufficient to exclude either.

Inasmuch as the attention of the general public is attracted more to the vivid incidents of industrial strife than to monthly variations in the quantity of money, or to estimates of budgetary deficits, the ordinary citizen is predisposed to a "wage-push" explanation of today's rising prices—even though he may concede, on occasion, that workers are only attempting to resist a decline in their living standards following, say, a rise in the price of food imports. And however the Treasury or the Bank of England view of the matter is interpreted, the recent policies of British governments suggest a strong attachment to the same "cost-push" hypothesis. For while huge budget deficits¹ have been incurred and the economy flooded with money, governments have sought to control the price level by direct intervention in what would otherwise be free collective bargaining—by sporadic "freezes", by income policies, by direct negotiations with trade unions, and (in desperation) sometimes by public appeals.

After so signal a failure to arrest the upward spiral of prices, one might reasonably hope that, sooner or later, governments would become more amenable to the arguments advanced by professional economists and others to the extent of trying to implement the policies they continue to propagate. Since the prospect is far from impossible, it behoves us to press the question that most economists today would regard as impertinent. Would stricter monetary and fiscal controls indeed suffice, in existing circumstances, to curb inflation and restore price stability?

A FEW YEARS AGO, I would have dissociated myself from any explanation of inflation couched primarily in terms of union militancy, and from any policy involving direct intervention in the process of collective bargaining.

¹ A Keynesian-based stability policy does not rule out the deliberate creation of large budget-deficits if, for any reason, aggregate investment (plus excess exports over imports) tends to fall below Full-Employment saving. But although the economic situation in the 1930s might be summarised in these terms, that prevailing in the post-War period was for the most part the reverse of this and, on a Keynesian view, would have warranted a policy of budget surpluses and high interest rates. True, nominal interest rates are today the highest in living memory. But once allowance is made for the anticipated rise in the price level, which is certainly well over 10% per annum, the "real" return on any government bond *net* of tax is negative, and has been negative for many years.

I would have gone along with the orthodox economic view: even where an inflation is not caused by excess expenditures, public or private, it can be checked by appropriate monetary and/or fiscal measures. I hasten to add, however, that I still believe that such measures would have been effective before World War II, and would probably have worked well enough until around the mid-1960s. They would not, I think, be successful today. But if the last government happened to be right in regarding the demands of organised labour as the major obstacle to any attempt to damp down the inflationary pressure, it is also true that the policies pursued by successive governments have done much to intensify a militancy among the working class that is, in the last resort, the product of more general economic forces.

Thus the role of governments (particularly in Britain), both in aggravating post-War inflations and in making them increasingly resistant to ordinary monetary and fiscal controls, is worthy of detailed commentary. But such detailed commentary is better appreciated after a description of the developments associated with the new inflation, developments that spring from a single phenomenon: sustained economic growth. Although these growth-inspired developments have been at work since the turn of the century or earlier, it is only in the last few years that they have combined to provide organised labour with a will and power effective enough to thwart the operation of traditional economic nostrums.

The Inflationary Process

IMPATIENT as I am to broach my main thesis, there are certain economic facts of life which bear on the experience of a prolonged period of rising prices and which, though not essential to this main thesis, certainly compound the difficulties of controlling the new inflation. Let me first touch upon three of such facts lest I be accused of unduly simplifying the issue.

1. *Productivity Differences between Industries.* In the nature of things technological advances occur more rapidly in some industries than in others, with the result that, irrespective of the individual efforts of the workers concerned, output per man-hour advances faster in the former. Over a thirty-year period, for instance, we should expect to discover a significant rise in the produc-

tivity of steel workers but no significant rise in that of hairdressers. Granted this fact of life, how does one cope? One policy, at once equitable and non-inflationary would be that of maintaining money wages roughly unchanged in all occupations while allowing increases in productivity, wherever they happen to occur, to be translated into *commensurate price reductions*. In this way the benefits of each and every technical or managerial innovation are *spread* throughout society as soon as they occur.

Alas, historical developments have brought about institutions that foster quite contrary results. As we now know, if productivity in the machine-tool industry rises by, say, 8% on the average each year, workers there will assert a right, in effect, to appropriate the *whole* of the improvement by demanding pay increases of at least 8% per annum. Of course, if in every sector of the economy productivity were also advancing at about 8% per annum, such claims could be met without causing problems. Instead of prices everywhere falling by about 8% with money incomes unchanged (an outcome that would result from following the more equitable policy mentioned above), all workers' incomes would now rise by 8% with prices remaining constant.

But, as indicated, this uniform advance in productivity does not take place. Indeed, there are some economic activities that fail to register any productivity gains. One thinks, in this connection, of some of the service industries—in the advanced industrial countries, they tend to grow as a proportion of national output—in which the measurable productivity of the bulk of the employees (consisting of office workers, salesmen, receptionists, teachers, journalists, actors, and others) does not change from one year to the next. Yet they, too, in the modern world, will expect pay increases over time comparable with those gained by employees in the technically advancing sectors of the economy.

The inflationary potential of this situation is easily illustrated. Imagine that the aggregate incomes of the employees in the service sectors, which show no productivity gains, make up about half the total income of the economy, and the remaining employees in the industrialised sectors account for the other half. If the productivity of the latter sectors is 8%, then for the economy as a whole it is 4%. But if the service workers, following the example of the industrialised workers, claim and receive an 8% increment in their money incomes, then all money incomes are raised by 8% while overall productivity—or the real output of the economy—has increased by only 4%. Since the rise in money incomes now exceeds the rise in real output by 4%, prices will rise by about 4%.²

² This is obviously a simplified account in which professional incomes, pensions, profits, and import prices, are ignored. In so far as they are brought into the picture, total money income may rise less than workers' income. But the margin they can provide in limiting the price rise is operative only at the beginning of such a process.

If workers become aware of this rise in prices—and, today, you can safely assume as much—their next pay claim will take into account the 4% increase in the cost of living. And so, in the absence of countervailing policies (and with productivity gains continuing to concentrate in the industrial sectors) the process gathers momentum as expectations of future price increases now enter into pay claims.

2. *The Tax Structure.* The growth of average money-incomes over time shifts income-earners into higher tax brackets and yields revenues to the government that form a rising proportion of national income. This growth in the proportion of government revenues arises (even if prices remain constant over time) simply as a result of the secular growth in per capita “real” income, and it offers strong political temptations to expand the range of state activities.

The faster the rate of inflation, the larger is the proportion of national income that accrues to governments, and—provided, always, that public alarm at the pace of inflation is not widespread—the greater the wherewithal at their disposal, a result which enables them occasionally to pose as the custodians of the public interest. For the “windfall” tax revenues, arising from their failure to restrain prices and money incomes, can be passed off as evidence of prudent budgeting. It is then possible to court political popularity on the Right and on the Left by using the windfall revenues to reduce tax rates and to increase public expenditure.

This phenomenon is well known to economists, and there have been a number of studies designed to estimate the real increase in government revenues for every 1% rise in aggregate money income.³ What is emerging for the first time, however, is the responsiveness of workers, not to their *gross* incomes but—having been pushed by prolonged inflation into the income-tax range—to their *disposable* incomes or “take-home pay.” As a corollary, their pay claims have become inflated.⁴ For if average weekly earnings are between £35 and £40, workers facing a 10% inflation will require increases in their gross income of between 12% and 14% (depending on family size, etc.) in

order simply to maintain their real spending.

3. *International Trade.* The greater a country's dependence upon international trade, the more prone it is to import an inflation from abroad (at least if its exchange-rate is held constant). If, for example, the British economy were infected by foreign inflations, its exports to the inflationary countries would rise; its imports from them would fall; and pressures would build up to appreciate the value of the pound. This could happen, but it has not been happening. Britain's rate of inflation is, in fact, somewhat above the average for the industrialised countries.

Nonetheless, the relative prices of a few important international goods (foodstuffs, oil, and some metals) have risen sharply over the year, but not so much from the result of inflation as of incipient world shortages that may or may not continue. In less crisis-prone times, this event would be manageable. World prices are continually changing. Provided exchange rates are flexible enough, the balance of payments looks after itself, and the higher costs of some items would be borne philosophically. But these are not ordinary times. The rise in food prices over the year has been steep enough to make a noticeable dent in living standards of a lot of people; and this at a time when we have become conditioned to expect a continuing improvement of our living standards from year to year.

As a result of political and economic events beyond our control, real income in Britain will not be greater this year than last year, and could be somewhat smaller. Indeed, in view of the possibility of unforeseeable political developments in countries from which we buy and sell; in view also of possible crop failures, ecological disasters, technological disappointments, and perhaps also (because of increasing world population) of a secular rise in the relative price of foodstuffs, it would be foolish to encourage a belief that the present interruption to rising prosperity can only be temporary and that we can reasonably anticipate a quick resumption of its continuance. Looking beyond the present crisis, then, a persistent refusal in Britain (and in other countries) to accept economic limitations, and to adjust our expectations to more modest rates of growth in the future, could only plunge us deeper into inflation.

The Growth of Expectations

LET ME NOW TURN to the main thesis concerning the link between economic growth and the new inflation.

Although the imperial conception of sustained economic growth harks back to Adam Smith or earlier, it was only during the 19th century that

³ The interested reader is referred to a study by Mishan and Dicks-Mireaux, “Progressive Taxation in an Inflationary Economy”, *American Economic Review*, September 1958.

⁴ The workers' growing tax awareness is discussed in some detail in an excellent booklet, *Do Trade Unions Cause Inflation?* by Jackson, Turner and Wilkinson, put out by the Department of Applied Economics, Cambridge (1972). Such is the extent of the tax deduction from wages that the authors suggest the unions could substantially increase the real earning of their members by negotiating for simultaneous reductions of prices and wages!

the idea of "perpetual progress" was pervasive enough to become a tacit presumption about the workings of Providence. From the mid-19th century until very few years ago, the predominant opinion among social philosophers, businessmen, economists and reformers, whether of the Right or Left, was that material conditions were sure to continue to improve over time. But until about the middle of this century, the mass of working people did not share this optimistic view of things. Despite the enthusiasm of the "intelligentsia" about the unlimited potential of science and technology, the ordinary working man was not given to thinking of the economic system as something powered by a growth engine that, when properly tended, must continuously and perceptibly increase the material wealth of society (to which increase of wealth, incidentally, the working class had a rightful claim). Indeed, as recently as the inter-War period, the overriding aim of the average worker was to find and to hold on to a job. And if the capitalist system came under fire from the Left, it was largely because that system appeared to be constitutionally unable to provide all willing workers with remunerative employment. According to the standard socialist criticism, the system was inherently wasteful as well as unjust. The Western world was littered with abandoned farms, factories, and mines, and everywhere there were armies of idle, bitter, and demoralised men.

In sharp contrast to the economic situation of the 1930s, the post-War era has been one of strong political, indeed electoral, emphasis on high employment and material growth in all the industrialised nations.

Five years of active post-War reconstruction merged into a prolonged period of prosperity. From it was born the notion of economic growth as the singular and self-evident goal of national policy and, by gradual extension, as the natural metric of national achievement and the sovereign remedy for all social disorders. Its active encouragement became the central concern of successive governments in all countries. The concern soon became an obsession, one that expressed itself in widely publicised schemes for improving economic performance, in plans to achieve growth targets, and in new institutions designed to promote productivity. It was reflected in recurrent forecasts and comparisons of real per capita *GNP*. Not surprisingly such developments have fostered expectations of increasing plenty that are exaggerated and almost certainly unrealisable.

⁵ Brian Griffiths, "Inflation: Causes, Consequences and Policies" appears in *Inflation: Economy and Society*, ed. by Lionel Robbins, Institute of Economic Affairs (1972).

When, following the "pay pause" of 1961, the National Economic Development Council was launched amid much fanfare in 1962, it soon came up with a statement, which received the widest publicity, about Britain's ability to maintain an average growth rate of 4%. I recall asking the late Professor Eli Devons what good he thought such a declaration could do. His prompt reply was to the effect that it would impress on the labour unions an argument for demanding an average annual pay increase of at least 4%, and thus would make a sensible contribution to the existing inflationary pressure. And, indeed, union sensitivity was such that a mention in the first "Neddy" report of the need for a rapid expansion of the building industry was followed by the largest wage claim in its history. Since then,

"... a variety of policies, all under the umbrella term 'prices and income policies', have been proposed in the UK to control inflation. They have ranged from a statutory control of wages and prices, a national body for settling wage disputes, a voluntary prices and incomes policy, a tax on wage demands above a stated percentage, a national job evaluation scheme, and the enunciation of a 'norm' for wage and price increases."⁶

During the years 1965 to 1970 no less than six White Papers appeared, each offering different criteria by which to assess prices and pay claims.

Thus, during the same decade over which a succession of ineffectual anti-inflationary pie-sharing schemes were being hatched by governments, the public was subjected to an intermittent hot-and-cold treatment, made restless with visions of burgeoning *GNPs*, and disquieted by a torrent of invidious statistics bearing on differentials as between occupations, on changes in the cost of living, and on per capita "real" earnings within and between countries.

THE INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCE of these growth-inspired developments has been to engender a quite unprecedented hypersensitivity among occupational groups throughout the country on the issue of their share of the national pie—or, more exactly, of the increase in their members' earnings as compared with the increase in the earnings of members in other occupations. One instance of this growing touchiness of the unions to the cost of living (and to relative position) occurred with the setting up of the Prices and Incomes Board of 1968. The event was soon followed by a round of exorbitant wage claims. Each union was anxious to submit and settle its claim before "the doors closed" and, also, to allow itself plenty of margin both for bargaining with the Board and for anticipated increases in the cost of living.

The Heath government's Income and Prices Policy, and its operative phases, One, Two, and

Three, undoubtedly acted to aggravate further the scramble among the unions, among the shop stewards and workers, to squeeze the most out of employers and the government. The fact that real wages today are calculated to be about twice as high as those prevailing in the 1930s has no deterrent effect whatever. What matters are the comparisons as of now. And everybody in Britain knows, by now, that real earnings in most of West Europe are higher than those here, and that in America they are about twice as high as they are in this country. British officials have repeatedly referred to such statistics, and the newspapers never cease to remind the citizen of them. He also reads and hears about large speculative gains, of record sums being spent on foreign travel and on popular entertainment, decent and indecent. Above all, each segment of organised labour is acutely aware that the widget-makers union managed to negotiate a 17½% increase six months ago, that the book-binders brotherhood got an extra £4.50 some eight months ago, and so on.

Under the impact of post-War events that can trace their origin to the Establishment's absorbing concern with economic growth, the workers of Britain (and of other Western countries also) are fast being transformed into a corps of pay vigilantes.

Why Traditional Economic Remedies May Now be Ineffective

GRANTED THAT the quickening response of the public to years of unabating growth mania has brought us to this frantic state in which we can scarcely digest our allotted slice of the pie for glowering at the slices being eaten by others, why cannot economists advise governments on practical measures for bringing pressure to bear on the growing avalanche of wage claims? Why, in other words, may it no longer be possible to apply fiscal and monetary measures so as eventually to stabilise prices or, at least, reduce significantly the rate of inflation experienced over the last two or three years?

A small part of the answer is to be found in the larger units of production that are promoted by those narrowly-conceived considerations of efficiency which come to the fore in optimistic periods of rapid economic expansion. Variety and small scale are part of the ecological prescription for systems stability. They should perhaps be part also of the economist's prescription. A city or region that comes to depend wholly on one or a few sources of supply for some vital service such as electricity, water, gas, sewage-disposal, public transport, is clearly more vulnerable than one

that can call on a larger number of smaller sources. This is particularly so in an age in which news-media give prominence to the occasional escapades of fanatic urban-guerrilla groups skilled in blackmail and havoc. We are beginning to realise that the economies-of-scale from larger plant size may be dearly paid for in terms of increased social hazard.

A larger part of the answer may be found in the growing power of organised labour over the last thirty years, and its awareness of that power. The ease with which the trade unions (or, for that matter, any determined group of workmen) are able to exert pressure on employers and on the public has, of course, been facilitated by the larger size of industrial plant, itself a product of technical advance, and also by nationalising such "key" industries as coal, steel, electricity generation, and rail transport. But even without any growth in the size of industrial plant or in the extent of nationalisation, it would not be reasonable to suppose that, with the rapid expansion of communications, action by workers would continue to be confined to particular firms or localities.

A strike against a single firm is not so effective (unless it happens to be in a strong monopoly position) as a strike against all employers in the industry, and this for two reasons. First, the single firm will choose to close down rather than so to increase its wage costs as to be unable to compete in the market for its products—whereas if all firms in the industry grant a sizable wage-increase the additional cost can be passed on to the public in the form of higher prices without much loss in sales volume. Second, any disruption of the flow of products or services from the industry as a whole, whether by strike action, "working to rule," or other method, will be suffered by the general public who, it is assumed, will always favour a speedy settlement through existing arbitration machinery or, in the last resort (which last resort is never far off today), through government intervention.

In a liberal democratic society, no political party wants to be associated by the electorate with continued industrial unrest or prolonged inconvenience (especially if an election is in the offing). And since it also does not wish its term of office to be associated with severe and protracted unemployment, the government of the day is tempted to seek concessional formulae rather than lay off workers in the face of exorbitant demands.

Thus, even without the broad sympathy and tacit support of a sizable proportion of the parliamentary Labour Party—which some London political commentators have made much of—the labour unions are in a strong position *vis à vis* any elected government, and particularly so in

those sectors of the economy where a withdrawal of labour at once reduces essential services. It is hardly surprising, then, that in the atmosphere of economic opportunism created by growth-men over the last thirty years, workers are not above using their organised power pretty ruthlessly, or, as they might put it, "realistically."

THE ABOVE INTERPRETATION of recent events is not likely to ruffle anyone unduly. But its significance has not been fully appreciated, least of all by economists whose explanations of the resulting inflation runs primarily in terms of inept monetary and fiscal policies.

I am suggesting that the monetary inflation cannot properly be understood without recognising its connection with the universal inflation of expectations that has characterised the history of the post-War world. Seen in that light it appears as a product, possibly an inevitable product, of the evolution of the capitalist ethic.

The liberal economist with his faith in material progress as the prime solvent of all social problems is, of course, aware that the restless spirit of discontent fostered by 19th-century capitalism has today diffused itself throughout the world. But he still tends to see this phenomenon as a positive source for social good inasmuch as the resulting struggle for material advancement is (he believes) channelled into sustained effort, and into innovation and ingenuity, which, over time, redound to the public benefit in the form of rising levels of prosperity.

And so it would if this spirit of discontent and acquisition raged only in the breasts of the bourgeoisie, or—in the 20th century—in the breasts of managers, technocrats, and professionals. But once this spirit takes possession of the masses, a socially beneficent outcome is no longer assured. For their own attempts at material self-betterment need not follow the path of economic virtue depicted by the liberal economist. Indeed it does not do so. Instead these attempts take the form of large-scale group action designed, not to contribute more to the size of the national pie, but simply to appropriate a larger share of it. Each union or organised group will, of course, continue to talk about "productivity", about "fairness", about "the national interest", about "proper differentials" and "the structure of the industry," these terms being a part of the political language of negotiation. But each realises that the concessions it can wring from society depend ultimately on the extent of the potential disruption it can inflict on the community.

In these circumstances the standard economic medicine may no longer work—and not only because, with the introduction of tolerable unemployment benefits, wages are resistant to any

downward pressure. Money wages were pretty rigid before World War II, as Keynes was then at pains to emphasise. In the present inter-union race to keep ahead of the cost of living, and to keep ahead of each other, wage levels cannot but escalate. A pattern of union militancy is emerging which threatens to be independent of demand conditions. Thus fiscal policy alone may be of no avail. Nor yet monetary policy, which though its allocative effects differ (working, as it does, directly through restrictions in bank lending and also indirectly through higher interest rates and capital losses), likewise acts initially through a reduction of aggregate spending.

THE ORTHODOX ARGUMENT is that a refusal by the authorities to expand the quantity of money any further, or their determination to reduce the quantity of money, will eventually make it impossible for employers to grant wage increases even if they are otherwise willing to do so. But if, following such a contingency, workers (though aware of the financial inability of the industry to meet their wage claims) remain adamant in "working to rule", or in refusing to return to work, what then? With the central bank under the control of the government of the day, their persistence in strike action has now to be interpreted as a form of direct pressure on the government to relax its monetary decisions. And in Britain, where more than a half of the country's total economic activity is directly under the control of the government, such pressure might be pretty effective.

In the absence of wide-ranging controls on capital and labour (which are thought to be politically unacceptable except in dire emergencies) one does not have to be a pessimist to suspect that only prolonged and widespread unemployment, comparable with that experienced in the 1930s, would today suffice to break the psychological momentum acquired by the inflationary process over the last two decades.

IN SUM, THEN, successive governments, in their monomaniac pursuit of economic growth, have sown the seeds of discontent among their peoples and are now reaping a bitter harvest. The unabating struggle for "more" between the unions (white-collar no less than blue-collar) has become more defiant over the last several years. In American cities there have been strikes of doctors and of policemen; in British cities, strikes of nurses, firemen, ambulance men, and school teachers.

The counter-pressure that the authorities can exert is limited. Legislation to withdraw unemployment benefits from workmen officially on strike would be politically unpopular, and it

might well unite the unions against any government contemplating it. Attempts by government spokesmen, editorial writers and columnists to arouse the indignation of the public against alleged irresponsibility are generally ineffectual. For the defiant workmen do not see themselves primarily as members of a larger political community held together by a common history and by a network of rights, customs, and obligations. The very idea of nationhood is made obsolescent by technological progress, by instant international communication, by mass mobility, and by supra-national aspirations arising from a growing consciousness of economic and ecological interdependence. The members of the union, on such occasions, see themselves rather as a fraternity asserting their claims against those of others. If the public, following the lead of the government and the press, evinces disapproval of their action, they simply close ranks and derive moral sustenance from their comradeship and their common cause.

Playing Dice with the Economy

TEN YEARS AGO the order of inflation in Britain was between 3% and 5%. Today it has begun to pass the 10% figure and approaches a take-off into strato-inflation.

On taking office, the Heath government, though it shared the general alarm at the pace of inflation, put the pursuit of faster economic growth before the goal of price stability. Despite the portents, it decided to take a gamble and—with what looks in retrospect like unwarrantable optimism—hoped to avert a rise in the rate of inflation by a rise in the rate of economic growth. It was as if the government, having unwittingly succumbed to its own growth propaganda, had begun to think of Britain, not in terms of a complex social order, but in terms of a gigantic business corporation. At the helm of Britain Incorporated, Mr Heath was evidently convinced that a gamble with the currency was justified if there were fair prospects of some larger dividend being earned by the Old Firm. Against all the evidence of past experience, he later hoped that his incomes policy, supplemented by frequent invocations of “the national interest”, would be effective in holding back the continued inflationary pressure until there would be goodies enough to satisfy everybody.

World events have, of course, played some part in precipitating the current malaise. But considering the mood of organised labour, and the government's monetary and fiscal policies of the last two years, only the most unlikely constellation of propitious events could have averted the

ensuing crisis.

In particular the fond vision of an “export-led growth” (in outline similar to that which was experienced by Germany during the 1950s and early '60s) tempted the Heath government into the present wilderness. One can, incidentally, just as well envisage an “import-led growth” taking place in Germany or elsewhere, or, for that matter a “trade-balanced growth.” Nevertheless, we can ignore the “export-led” aspect of the economic growth objective—which, if realised, has the incidental effect of increasing our overseas assets by reducing the domestic supply of goods, so making it more inflationary than its counterpart, “import-led growth.” For the anti-inflationary contribution to be had from rapid economic growth itself arises essentially from the productivity increases that enable workers to receive higher wages without the prices of goods having to rise or to rise very much.

This dash for economic growth was not a good gamble. Although the Establishment is loath to admit it, the ability to determine the rate of the economy's growth during the next year or two—as distinct from the ability to promote policies that are believed to encourage economic growth—is beyond the power of governments. It would be so even if the economy were not subject to international forces. For a number of reasons any one can adduce, but no one can be quite sure of, the United Kingdom has since the War settled down to an average growth rate approaching 3%, as measured by the conventional indices. The government can, of course, announce its intentions of trying for a 4% or 5% growth rate, and make a lot of busy noise in the process. But no one is at all surprised if it turns out to be only 1% or 2% after all. There are always those ubiquitous world forces to play with in any post-mortem, to say nothing of “sluggish management” or “structural perversities.”

Now as events would have it, something that (on current information) looked like a 5% growth rate was, in fact, achieved in the year ending about mid-1973. But the greater part of this apparent growth can be attributed, not to any significant productivity gains (which is what growth-men are really after) but to the re-employment of about half-a-million British workers. Although this is undoubtedly a good thing, it is not exactly what is wanted in the way of margin for meeting wage claims. Indeed, the increase in employment of itself added something to the import bill, and thus worsened Britain's balance of payments which was already suffering from the sharp increase in world prices of food-stuffs and minerals.

The government was, of course, hoping for a slide in the world prices of raw materials which,

had it occurred, would not only have relieved the balance of payments deficit but would also have reduced the cost of living. But it was not to be.

THE FORCES THAT COMBINE to produce the new inflation are, as I have argued, such as to render it intractable to the usual order of monetary or fiscal manipulation. But the particular circumstances of the last two years have clearly acted to accelerate the inflationary trend. With the overall price-level rising at a 10% annual rate, with food prices rising more than twice as fast, and with the general expectation that prices will continue to rise as fast if not faster, labour unions were no longer to be satisfied with the customary 5-to-10% pay concession. Impelled by anticipations of continuing inflation, by an awareness of the ground they had already lost in the last year, and by an anxiety not to be "outbid" by the claims of rival unions, wage demands are now of the order of between 20 and 30%. Thus the tide of wage expectations is rising at a rate that must soon swamp the dykes hastily erected by the last government's income policy.

The "pay pause" arising from the government's prices and incomes policy hardly helped matters. The Phase One "freeze" (from November 1972 to March 1973) was short enough to be tolerated. The following six months of Phase Two (which permitted up to £1-a-week plus 4%) was borne with, but under protest. The ill-fated Phase Three, which ineptly gives hostages to fortune by allowing a 40-pence increase for every percentage point above a further 7% rise in the cost of living index (which crucial figure we shall soon realise), was vigorously rejected by a number of powerful unions. In retrospect, the only certain effect of the Heath government's Income Policy—apart from a short truce on the wages front—was once more to rivet the attention of every occupational group in the country on its own pay position, both in relation to the cost of living and in relation to the pay of other occupational groups.

Exhortation in the circumstances is ineffective. Ministers have repeatedly declared that pay increases in excess of productivity increases can only raise prices further. For the economy as a whole, the exercise is not only futile but wasteful of energy. Yet, though true for "the economy as a whole", it is not true for each particular segment of it. If the widget-makers union receives a pay increase in excess of the average, then it does indeed improve its position in real terms and in the general pay-structure, notwithstanding the consequent rise in widget prices. The widget-makers union knows this. So does every other union. The appeal to enlightened self-interest persuades no one.

As for considerations of equity, at any time in

modern history a consensus on a fair wage structure for industry would have been difficult to secure and difficult to implement. With the accent today largely on improving one's own union position relative to that of other unions, the notion of some hypothetical structure of wages acceptable to the trade union movement as a whole is chimerical. An incomes policy predicated on the belief that there is such an animal—or that it can be brought into being by a concerted effort involving labour, management, and government—is doomed to failure.

FINALLY, EVEN IF BY SOME MIRACLE agreement could be reached on the magnitudes of ten thousand pay-differentials, and if (by some further miracle) the resulting pay-structure were to coincide with the requirements of an efficient market, any future alteration of supply conditions, any technical innovation, any change in the pattern of demand, would dislodge this coincidence. If the resulting conflict between the market pay-structure and the original "equitable" pay-structure were politically resolved in favour of the latter, the consequence would be a redundancy of labour in some industries and a shortage of labour in others, and/or a mounting surplus of some goods and an increasing shortage of others. Thus, a "Relativities Board" that did not manage continually to re-align itself (under one formula or another) with the emerging pattern of wants, as revealed by the market, could avoid similar wastes only if it were supplemented by legislation charged with the over-all direction of labour and capital.

The Appeal to Patriotism

IN THE LAST RESORT, as we know, there is always the appeal to patriotism. When the nation faces a common peril, factional interests must be swept aside. Such an appeal depends obviously on the public's perception of the danger that allegedly threatens it, and the sad truth is that today all government utterances on the gravity of a crisis are taken by the British public with more than a grain of salt. Were the public persuaded, however, of a real danger, its response would indeed depend on the extent of its patriotism. An appeal to all citizens to sink their differences and to make a sacrifice for the common good might have elicited some response before the last War. It is unlikely to do so today.

The last War came as near as can reasonably be expected in modern times to welding a country into a nation. Having stood alone for over a year, defying the might of the *Wehrmacht*, Britain emerged from the ordeal exhausted but unbroken, and with a new sense of national pride.

Her perseverance and determination during that dark hour commanded the respect of all the Allied nations.

The spirit with which she emerged from the long-drawn conflict was an intangible asset, but an invaluable one. Wise statesmanship would have sought to shore it up against the distintegrative tide of the new affluence. But wise statesmanship has been in short supply for some time. The policies followed by successive governments could not have been better calculated to undermine this new-found national pride and self-confidence. Three episodes are illustrative: Commonwealth immigration, the legend of "the English Disease", and the campaign surrounding Britain's entry into the EEC. A long word on each.

1. *Commonwealth Immigration.* In the mid-1950s, immigration from Britain's ex-Empire and colonies, mainly of unskilled workers and their families seeking employment and high wages in these (by any international standard) already crowded islands, began to build up. On some fundamental moral principle, perhaps, no hindrance to man's settling anywhere in the world can be justified. On such a principle, there can be no more objection to 200 millions settling in Britain than 2 millions. But if one's morality is more parochial, to the extent at least of evincing a concern about the impact of large-scale immigration of particular peoples on the welfare, the character, and the political future of one's own countrymen, there is a case to be argued and a policy to be determined.

In the event, however, our enlightened rulers found nothing to argue about. Britain had long had a traditional open-door policy—which worked well enough so long as those who wished to pass through the open door (if we exclude our immediate neighbours, the Irish) never numbered more than a few thousand a year. Now that the stream of humanity coming through the still open door looked about to take on the dimensions of a torrent, second thoughts were called for.

As in so many critical issues since the War, however, the British people were just not consulted. Nor was this the last time a momentous decision was to be taken blithely on their behalf by enlightened governments with the connivance or support of the greater part of the press. Anyone who openly opposed this growing influx of migrants, indeed anyone who questioned it, was dismissed as a "racist". The prevailing liberal conscience apparently could discern no more in the government's permissive policy than enlightened economic self-interest, a view illustrated by Mr R. A. Butler's assertion (as late as 1961) that we in this country needed the immigrants for the labour they provided.

To put it mildly, this was bad economics. For a general shortage of labour, a general shortage of capital, a general shortage of goods, indeed a general shortage of everything but money, are the familiar symptoms of a chronic inflation, and one that had afflicted Britain for a decade. China, with about 400 million workers, could just as well be made to generate a "labour shortage" if its government also failed persistently to curb aggregate excess demand. In the event, the government made a virtue of its incompetence to control the upward drift in prices by conveying the impression that mass Commonwealth immigration was a welcome bonus to the domestic labour market and was an essential plank in its economic policy.

However, unlike the import of goods, the "import" of labour—and mostly unskilled labour at that—had two adverse short-run effects in the existing economic circumstances. The consequent demand for additional industrial and social capital, both to equip and to accommodate the immigrants, was large enough to aggravate the excess aggregate demand and so to contribute to the existing inflation, while their import requirements served to worsen the balance of payments. In the longer run, the most likely effect of large-scale immigration of unskilled labour into Britain is that of exerting a downward pressure on the rising trend in real wages, and also of raising rents and profits relative to wages.

SUCH ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES of large-scale immigration into Britain are, however, only ancillary to the political argument. They are illustrative of the delusions of the mid-twentieth-century liberal mind, guided, as it has been since the last War, more by dogmatic beliefs than by pragmatic considerations. By 1962, when popular resentment could no longer be ignored, the gates were officially closed, or nearly so, and within were at least one million new Commonwealth citizens. Today, augmented by net reproduction and by an unknown number of illegal immigrants, the figure of two million is more plausible.

Of course, we have had immigrants since the Norman invasion and, over time, we have absorbed them and survived. And I would be the last to deny that fifty thousand or a hundred thousand of the new immigrants could have been assimilated in the fullness of time, and no one made much the worse for it. But a million or two of such immigrants is quite a different matter. For the first time in our long history we have become a multi-racial society. One can rejoice at the event or one can regret it. What one cannot do, with any pretence at honesty, is to act as if it does not signify—which is, of course, the official attitude.

As I remarked above, this extraordinary

decision "to go multi-racial" was never debated by the public at large. It was never even debated in Parliament. We simply blundered overnight, so to speak, into a multi-racial society that is also a "multi-coloured" society, so adding to our existing social problems the incipient resentments, recriminations, and all the pangs and tribulations that such a transformation entails—and out of which, as a matter of course, a number of enlightened liberals now make a passable living.

Political energy and economic resources have now to be expended in the endeavour to contain racial antagonisms on both sides, and to absorb these new citizens into the economy and, it is to be hoped, into the life of the country. If illegal immigration can be held down (a very big *if*), we may, within the next fifty years or so, have successfully integrated them into our society, if it is by then still in existence. But for the foreseeable future, the risks and disabilities of a new multi-racial society have to be borne with.

In the meantime, the idea of the British as a people is in the crucible. The ordinary man can no longer feel that this country is his country in the same way as before. And the allegiance of a sizable proportion of the population can no longer be taken for granted. For the immigrants do not yet share with us a common historical memory, much less a common pride in our past. Such mundane facts, added to the scepticism and disbelief bred of the New Affluence, must contribute to the erosion of those myths of "kith and kin" which, though expendable enough for the truly detached intellectual, are the sources of inspiration that in moments of common danger bring citizens together ready and eager to make sacrifices.

2. *The "English Disease."* As already indicated, the central and unrelieved preoccupation of governments since World War II has been with the furtherance of economic growth. Elsewhere^{*} I have sought to show that, for the wealthier countries at least, there is no longer any presumption that rising per-capita outputs enhance social well-being. Indeed, the contrary effect is more likely. Here I confine myself to the effect on the character of the British people arising from the policies, attitudes, and pronouncements of British governments and the supporting Establishment once they had thrown themselves in abandon at the feet of the new golden calf. While repeated appeals to self-interest went part of the way to corrupt the good sense of the British, an unwitting but nonetheless insidious form of propaganda, supplemented by the visible scrap-

ping of part of their heritage, went far to dissipate their confidence in themselves as a nation.

Once the *GNP* figure had become universally established as the measure of national achievement, and the Growth Rate accepted as the index of national virtue, the British people were to be represented by successive governments, by industrialists, journalists, and technocrats—in fact all who fondly prided themselves on being in alliance with the Future—as the laggards of the New Europe. The laxity and smugness of the British were a theme of universal denigration. Newspaper editorials, radio commentary, lectures, tracts, and sermons, all waxed eloquent at some point on the topic of the "English disease", and, when not facetious, spoke darkly of our impending eclipse by other more "thrustful" countries. Sport it was to bemoan our "lamentable growth performance" and to depict us as an effete power, lost without old empire and new purpose, growing in upon ourselves, or declining into an amiable backwater of history, a sad and slightly ridiculous spectacle to those alert and go-ahead Europeans across the Channel. And such is the power of reiteration that by 1970, with all the modern paraphernalia of prosperity blatantly in evidence, cluttering up our homes and cluttering up our streets, half the housewives of Britain, even those who couldn't tell a growth index from a prison record, had begun to worry about "Britain's economic survival."

By then, every facet of our national life, save the economic, had faded into insignificance. The British contribution to science and literature, to drama and ballet; Britain's unparalleled institutions, its BBC, its police force, its law courts, its university system; the political genius of the British people, the humaneness of their society, the prevailing climate of moderation and good sense—these inestimable national assets, all the product of a complex historical process, were just not agenda in the new economic assessment of the worth of a nation.

As early as 1960 the people of this country were being solemnly assured that only entry into the EEC could save them from virtual extinction. There they would drink reviving waters, there they would regain their strength and assume a leading role in the affairs of a new and powerful union. Every metaphor in the index, from the tonic effects of cold showers to the beckonings of manifest destiny, was enlisted in order to impress upon the ordinary citizen the imperative of merging his country's economic and political future with those of the Six.

THE CURRENCY CONVERSION came in 1971. The case for it in terms of economic efficiency alone is doubtful. Indeed it is more than doubtful,

^{*} For instance, in my *ENCOUNTER* article, "To Grow or Not to Grow: What are the Issues?", May 1973.

since the changeover to a decimal currency (in which one new penny was to equal 2.2/5 old pennies) had the predictable effect of giving a perceptible fillip to the upward drift of prices. Yet economic efficiency is but one consideration. There are others, seemingly less tangible but no less potent, of sentiment, pride, and custom. Pounds, shillings, and pence are not merely convenient units of account and currency. They are also an essential part of John Bull's accoutrements, an extension of Britain's personality. Our national system of weights and measures, our pints and yards, our acres and fathoms, which are now to be thrown into limbo as so much jetsam, are also part of our Anglo-Saxon heritage. They ring familiar to our ears as church bells. They are resonant with centuries of British history. They are part of our language and our literature. And in a world in which familiar landmarks are vanishing, in which, as a result of rapid world communication and mass tourism, differences in accent and architecture, differences in character and custom, are everywhere being ironed out, there is much to be said for holding on tenaciously to these peculiar manifestations of a national persona. But, on yet another issue of deep national concern, the government made no pretence even of consulting the feelings of the British people.

In between bouts of excoriating the nation for its wilful slackness, governments have also found time to wheedle it for electoral reasons. Apparently, we had "never had it so good," and there was always more mod-cons gadgetry on the way. For, after all, we were becoming richer—though, of course, not nearly so fast as we should like.

Admittedly, it can be argued that recurrent appeals to greed, to ambition, and to self-seeking could make little difference in view of the strong secular forces operating to foster opportunism. Yet whatever difference it could make was thrown into the same scale as those secular forces, adding its weight to them.

3. *Britain's Début into the Common Market.* The government's decision in 1972 to make Britain a member of the EEC was more than a snub to the manifest lingerings of national sentiment in the country, which it regarded simply as

an anachronism. It was the culmination of a policy pursued by successive governments since 1960, one marked by an increasing readiness effectively to repudiate a rich and unique patrimony in order to be seen bravely facing "the winds of change"—which, it was confidently expected, would blow up our *GNP* a little faster. For over a decade the heads of all three political parties had been calmly contemplating an Act that would formally set in motion a process, the intent and culmination of which was to expunge the identity and annul the sovereignty of the British people in exchange for a windy seat in this contrived and cumbersome Continental polity—though always with the telling proviso that "the price" should be "right."

British governments knew perfectly well that membership in such a union implied eventually a surrender of sovereignty. The Treaty of Rome was explicit on this issue, and the founding fathers of the European Union advised us more than once that they were "not in business, but in politics." For all that, British pro-Marketeers put the stress of their propaganda on the supposed economic advantages. Admittedly there would be some upward "harmonisation" of food prices, and some contribution to be made to the common budget. But all this would be as nothing compared with the magnitude of those imponderable long-term benefits which, as it happened, began to recede into a mist of vagueness and verbiage as the moment drew closer. Indeed, on the very eve of our entry, Mr Heath's buoyant spirits were muted for a few minutes as, over the air, he cautioned the nation in effect not to be too impatient to redeem the promissory notes so lavishly distributed by the pro-Marketeers. Those "immeasurable" long-term economic benefits, which had featured so large in the government's pro-Market propaganda,⁷ might not, he now owned, be enjoyed in our own lifetime, perhaps not even in our children's lifetime, but in our children's children's lifetime.

When in the early '70s the issue of sovereignty was becoming more difficult to evade, two tactics were employed. One was to deny that our sovereignty, in any real sense, would be impaired by entering the EEC. The other was to assert that there was, in any case, no meaningful sovereignty left to impair, either on the ground that a Britain unconjoined with the EEC could not be expected to survive as an economically viable entity or, more generally, on the grounds that sovereignty in the modern world was after all no more than a fiction (a proposition which, strangely enough, was supposed to follow from the premise that any nation's sovereign powers were subject to restraints in a world of sovereign states).

⁷ House of Commons, June 14, 1971. *Sir Derek Walker-Smith (East Hertfordshire, Conservative)*: "With regard to the so-called dynamic effects, will he [Mr John Davies] repeat in this House and to the country what he said with such admirable candour in his press conference in Stockholm to the effect that these so-called dynamic effects were not capable of measurement?"

Mr. John Davies (Secretary of State for Trade and Industry): "I have never failed to say so. It is clear at this time that they are not capable of accurate forward assessment, but that they are powerful and will predominate, I have no doubt". (Reported in *The Times*, 15 June 1971)

A year of membership in this bureaucratic European Club, with its endless manoeuvre and intrigue, has at least had the salutary effect of making two things crystal clear. First, that the sovereignty of Parliament is indeed being trimmed around the edges (as was confirmed in the report of the recent Parliamentary committee set up in response to protests about the indigestible flow of regulations and directives emanating from the Brussels Commission). Second, that those loudly-heralded long-run economic benefits are after all, as so many of us had in any case suspected, to be reaped only in the "Keynesian long run"; that is, "when we are all dead."

Yet, however we rate the economic and political consequences, the fact remains that, on a constitutional issue of momentous consequence for the nation, the government chose to ignore the widespread public antipathy and to avail itself of a small Parliamentary majority to haul the country into the Market. For so unprecedented and apparently irrevocable a constitutional innovation, one that would for the first time in Britain's long history merge her institutions and her sovereignty into a wider political entity, surely nothing less than an overwhelming approval of the British people would have sufficed; at least, say, a two-thirds majority in Parliament and in the country at large. In the event, the government's decision failed to elicit the support even of half the country, a fact that apparently caused it no distress whatsoever since it chose to interpret its election to office as conferring on it a mandate "to lead the nation" even if (or rather especially if) on this occasion it meant "dragging the country screaming into the twentieth century."

So Mr Heath wrote himself, or rather entangled himself, into history and secured for the ungrateful British that much-coveted prize, "a voice in the council of Europe." Initially, of course, it was only Mr Heath's authentic voice, large and leaden with the clichés of statesmanship. And though it sounds loud enough at home, on the Continent it was invariably topped by M. Pompidou's louder voice.

Ironically enough, it was Mr Heath who, having publicly and joyfully severed the trappings of nationality at the beginning of 1973, was then to appeal to recalcitrant labour unions, at a time of crisis, towards the end of the year, in the name of "national unity."

The Emerging Pattern

LET ME, IN CONCLUSION, bring together the pieces that make up the broad picture, the larger pieces exhibited above and some of the

smaller pieces that can now be fitted in without cluttering it with too much detail.

Put in its bluntest terms, the thesis I argue is that the chief causes of contemporary inflations are linked closely with the current stage of economic growth. The primary fact is that the post-War world is convulsed by a dangerous virus commonly referred to as "the revolution of rising expectations." Among the poorer countries, the growing discontent is easily translated into disaffection which, where it has not been repressed by virtual dictatorship, has created social and political instability. In the wealthier non-communist countries, however, this chronic dissatisfaction and restlessness have themselves influenced monetary and fiscal laxity, and it has brought them that much closer to self-sustaining inflation.

Following the post-War reconstruction period, from 1945 to about 1950, the inflationary impulse arose directly from the growing optimism shared both by ordinary people and by businessmen. With a "live today, pay tomorrow" spirit in the air, expenditures on consumption and investment goods remained high. They were supplemented—in response to widespread expectations of more extensive welfare-services by the state—by increasing outlays on the public sector of the economy that were, in any case, a far larger proportion of national expenditure than they were before World War II. Given the high level of employment which (it was popularly thought) governments were able and, therefore, politically obliged to maintain, given also the psychology of a new generation that had never lived through an economic slump or even through a period of falling prices, the resultant tendency (up to 1970) to slip into over-all excess expenditure and rising inflation is not surprising.

This milder form of inflation in the West may now be regarded only as a first phase. It could, perhaps, have been controlled for a time by conventional economic remedies, had they been promptly and competently applied by governments less eager than in fact they were both to whet and to appease the affluent citizen's already enlarged appetites. But the mushroom growth of expectations in the West, at least, has come to embrace a new feature. As a result inflation today is entering a new and more virulent phase.

Although universal impatience with existing material standards accompanied by expectations of more, ever more, tends to breed inflation in so far as it issues in excessive expenditures by consumers, by governments, and businessmen, there is now more to it than that. There is a new development arising from the technological aspects of economic growth. Industrial advances that increase the size of the optimal plant or

public utility act inevitably to increase the vulnerability of population centres that depend upon them. At the same time, the post-War spread of news-media has enabled organised labour to realise more quickly the power it can wield by depriving the community at large of essential services or by exposing it to inconvenience or risk.

Owing to our recent familiarity with this form of collective blackmail, its significance has not been fully appreciated by the liberal economist. Economic opportunism has been valued by the liberal or *laissez-faire* economist as the animus that inspires the "invisible hand." To the growth economist in particular, habitual discontent is positively esteemed as being the mainspring of economic progress. Ignoring the broader social implications of such a presumption, its corollaries are valid enough provided the diffusion of discontent and opportunism expresses itself in personal efforts as self-betterment through increased exertion and enterprise. If instead this ethos-embedded discontent finds vent in collective action, in agitating for a bigger share of the annual cornucopia of goodies, it helps neither to animate the invisible hand nor to promote economic progress. It promotes only inflation—all the more so, as it is seen by all to be effective, and seen by all to be resistant to the economist's conventional fiscal and monetary instruments.

We may plausibly conclude that there are turbulent times ahead for the West. For we seem to have reached a stage where we have to make a political choice between price stability and maintaining traditional freedoms—to the extent, at least, of leaving intact the existing power of trade unions and shop stewards. Certainly, price-stability, the welfare state, and free collective bargaining, are no longer mutually compatible.

TO FILL IN THE PICTURE, these growth-produced developments have to be supplemented by others of a less tangible nature.

The concomitant decline of patriotic sentiment,

⁸ The ebb of patriotic sentiment is hastened by the transformation of the physical environment itself in response to the more recent products of economic growth. For it is becoming harder for the British, the young in particular, to think affectionately of their country as an island home when the continual roar overhead suggests that it is more of a gigantic airstrip, a place of perpetual transit, a stopping-off point in the international tourists' itinerary.

of civic pride, of *civitas*, means that there is today no strong countervailing force which the state can invoke in times of crisis. This tendency too, is an unavoidable by-product of economic progress. For this decline of patriotism, along with the erosion of moral consensus and religious faith, is the counterpart of the spread of scepticism and disbelief attributable to the growth of secular knowledge and education. The most obscure citizen today, tuning in to his favourite programme, hears once-sacred beliefs and moral presuppositions subjected to repeated probing, dissection, and doubt.

To these morally debilitating developments may be added some auxiliary, possibly transitory, but nonetheless growth-induced factors. One is the new pop culture, which emerged partly in response to an affluence-begotten youth market with a commercial emphasis on excitement, on stylised violence and carnality; a pop culture sporting a permissive "own thing" ethic that is antithetic to traditional values and, more generally, to social order. Thus the idealism of the young finds little outlet in any form of patriotic feelings—it is frittered away in a vague universalism, with passions reserved only for group or gang loyalties, for "them and us", for sporadic movements and ephemeral causes and cults.⁸

The case of the U.K., however, has an additional special interest in so far as the Establishment there, ably represented by successive post-War governments in their fatuous and fulsome worship of economic growth, went out of its way to undermine the self-respect and confidence of the British people, to extinguish their sense of national identity, and to cut them off from their history by tearing up the emblems and regalia of their past—all in the cheerless cause and under the tawdry banner of economic efficiency.

A dispiriting parade of shuffling ministers sniffing wearily in the winds of change for economic clues to the shape of the future have persistently sought to reduce their countrymen to economic men pure and simple, economic men caring for naught but the size of their pay packets—and the size of everyone else's. The extent of their success in this sorry endeavour, abetted as they were in any case by complex forces unleashed by economic growth, is today also a measure of the extent of their failure to control this new and more dangerous phase of inflation.



Column

I DON'T KNOW that the name of Aaron Burr conveys much to the British novel-reading public, or what they will be led to expect by the title, *Burr*,¹ of Gore Vidal's novel, which in the United States has been a phenom-

enonal best-seller. There, of course, things are different, for in his native land Aaron Burr is something of a folk-villain, not much lower in public repute than Benedict Arnold, under whom indeed Burr served on Arnold's ill-fated expedition against Quebec.

The grounds of Burr's ill fame are two. In the first place, he shot Alexander Hamilton in a duel, and thus brought to a premature end the career of a man who perhaps more than any other left the mark of his own personality on the Constitution of the United States. In the second place, in 1804 he plotted to invade Mexico and establish his own independent government there, with the possibility that it might be joined by the western states of the Union and form an empire on a Napoleonic scale. For this he was prosecuted for treason to the United States.

Perhaps one should add a third reason for Burr's evil reputation in his own country. He was the grandson, on his mother's side, of the great New England theologian, Jonathan Edwards, who perhaps did as much as any man to promote the triumph of the Puritan conscience in the United States. Burr was expected to follow in his grandfather's footsteps, but after a brief period devoted to the study of theology at the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University), of which his father was the second president, he forswore "completely and for ever" the doctrines of Jonathan Edwards, which in the New England of that time was rather like forswearing the Deity himself.

Burr is therefore a curious figure for an American to choose as the hero of an historical novel; it is rather as if an Englishman were to make a hero out of Titus Oates. But since the American in question is Gore Vidal, one should not perhaps be surprised, because Burr provides him with a perfect medium through which he can develop his own idiosyncratic and iconoclastic views on American history and American politics. I must confess that until now I have not been a great admirer of Gore Vidal's novels; they seem

to me smart and shallow, and deeply infected by radical chic. *Burr*, however, seems to me admirable, both as a novel and as an imaginative reconstruction of history, and it amply deserves the great success it has had in the United States. I hope it has an equal success here.

In one sense, however, it is possible to regret that *Burr* should have found so warm a welcome in the United States. One of the most interesting, and diverting, features of the novel is the merciless hatchet job Mr Vidal performs on the founding fathers of the United States, as seen through the cynical and disabused eyes of his hero, who was once very nearly President himself, instead of Jefferson. Washington is revealed as the general who never won a battle and the statesman whose only motives were self-interest and the desire for self-aggrandisement; Jefferson as a kind of half-mad tyrant who, under a veneer of radicalism, is intent on the territorial expansion of the United States, the enlargement of his own power, and a republic reserved to white slave-owning farmers.

The contrast between Mr Vidal's portraits of the fathers of the Republic and those of the accepted textbooks (especially those school textbooks which shape a young American's picture of his own history) is so great that, though Mr Vidal claims to have historical evidence for every incident in his novel, one cannot help thinking that they are exaggerated to the point of caricature. What cannot be denied, however, is that his description of the United States in its first formative period is a marvellously vivid, amusing and fascinating one, and in its picture of how human beings, particularly politicians, actually do behave in real life carries far more conviction than anything one finds in the textbooks. I must pay Mr Vidal the compliment of saying that, after reading *Burr*, I will never quite see the early history of the Republic in the same light again.

WHAT ONE WONDERS AT is that so radical an attack on the myths and legends of early American history should be received with such enthusiastic popular acclaim. Mr Vidal plays the part of the iconoclast with the greatest of zest, but does the iconoclast normally do his work to the applause of the crowd, unless the idols he attacks have already lost their magical aura? Does the success of *Burr*, in fact, imply that America has already turned its back upon its past, or rather, that picture of its past which sustained it in its historic mission, and has it in fact discarded dearly cherished myths and legends because it feels it no longer has any mission to pursue?

It was always one part of the American dream that the United States was born out of a past that

¹ *Burr*. By GORE VIDAL. Random House, \$8.95; Heinemann, £2.75.

was purer and simpler than the present, when men acted towards each other with the rough frankness and candour of frontiersmen, and had not yet been corrupted by the vices and luxuries of civilisation. It was a form of nostalgia which also held a promise for the future, not only for America, but for all those peoples beyond its frontiers who have never known the true meaning of liberty. What happens if that dream is shown to be what it really is, only a dream, with no basis in reality, which in the past was as mean, sordid and brutal as it is in the present, and whose heroes were no less vain, self-seeking, devious and egotistical than they are today?

Burr provokes such questions in ways that are not irrelevant to the condition of America today. Americans who, after long travail and tribulation, have come to the conclusion that the war in Viet Nam was in truth both an error and a crime have found some comfort in thinking that the war was, after all, an aberration, the product of a unique historical situation which was not characteristic of America's past and is not likely to be repeated in the future. But if *Burr* is an accurate reflection of the early years of the Republic there always was in the United States from its very birth an overriding compulsion to extend its territorial dominion, an imperial theme so powerful that it disdained all moral and constitutional restraints, and dragged all Presidents in its wake, whatever their professed political beliefs and objectives.

Similarly, many Americans, dismayed by Watergate and its aftermath, have comforted themselves by thinking either that it is an exceptional occasion arising out of the errors and misdemeanours of a bad President, or that it is simply an extreme example of the kind of scandal which has long disfigured American politics without, however, destroying their underlying republican virtues. But what if, as *Burr* suggests, there has always been something in the Presidential office, a monarchical element which is the mark which Hamilton left upon it, which makes its incumbent intent on aggrandising his personal power, impatient of constitutional restraints, and prone to identify the well-being of the United States with the power of the chief executive, so that any increase in the one is to the advantage of the other, and that this is true whether the chief executive is a Washington or a Jefferson, a Kennedy or a Nixon?

It is a tribute to the vividness with which Mr Vidal depicts the historical era in which his novel is set, and the characters who play their part in it, that he gives to such questions a compelling interest and immediacy. *Burr* is certainly a brilliant *tour de force* but I am inclined to think that it is something rather more than that.

RE-READING *La Rue Royale, Les Conquérants, La Condition Humaine*, I have had recourse once again to M. Lacouture's admirable biography of Malraux, of which I wrote in the October 1973 issue of *ENCOUNTER*. I wish that an English edition of the book were available, because there is a sense in which one can say that, without Malraux, it would be impossible to understand some of the most powerful forces which have shaped the present age; all the more because, in the West, they have been driven underground or into silence, of which Malraux is as fond as he is of words, or else today have emerged into the light in forms so distorted and disfigured that they have become a mere travesty of what they should be and are.

Malraux's life is itself a kind of legend, part fairy story, part epic, part thriller, and, like all legends, filled with mysteries, contradictions, and paradoxes. "A shilling life will give you all the facts," wrote Auden in a poem about T. E. Lawrence, who was a hero of his as well as of Malraux's. In Malraux's case this is by no means true, particularly when he is himself the source of the facts. With him, the facts are exceedingly complicated and justify all the care and effort which M. Lacouture has devoted to unravelling the vicissitudes of his life.

It is surely one of the most remarkable careers of modern times. None of the great literary *vedettes* of our age, the Lawrences, Hemingways, Sartres, can begin to compare with Malraux in his particular combination of man of letters, adventurer, and man of action. And yet, in the peculiar circumstances of our time, a kind of shadow fell across his fame in his later years; it was the shadow, in fact, of General Charles de Gaulle.

I FIRST SAW Malraux at a congress in Paris in the '30s of the Writers' International Association (a Communist front organisation invented and manipulated by the great political prestidigitator, Willi Muenzenberg). In appearance, he was the image of the romantic Byronic rebel, with a lock of hair that fell across a furrowed brow, magnificent eyes set in a face that was contorted with a compulsive *tic*, and with an address, an eloquence, a force of personality which completely dominated the hall in which he spoke. People said that his *tic* was the result of opium addiction acquired in China as a collaborator of Borodin, the Soviet adviser to the Kuomintang; such stories only added to his romantic appeal. He seemed, then, the genuine Hero of Our Time, what Henry James would have called the Real Right Thing, and if today he were to appear on any platform with those looks, those eyes, that manner, that compulsive *tic*, that aura of the mysterious East,

he would without doubt be the idol of every hippy group in the world.

The defection (as it was thought) of Malraux from the ranks of the revolution, first into the French army and, next, the embrace of General de Gaulle, bewildered his left-wing admirers and bewildered them even more when he emerged as General de Gaulle's *homme de confiance* and Minister of Culture. What was it that could possibly bind these two strange, remarkable men together, unless it was treachery by Malraux to all the revolutionary ideas he had hitherto professed?

Perhaps it was simply the recognition by each of the genius of the other, which allowed them to meet on the basis of an equality which de Gaulle at least did not willingly concede to many people. Both had an overpowering sense of their own personal worth, and both could claim that they had proved it in action. Both had a vision of human destiny far wider and more comprehensive than is usually found in politicians, a sense of the tragic element implied in *la condition humaine*, and the feeling that, under such circumstances only by an intense assertion of personality can men preserve their human dignity. In a sense, however surprising Malraux's adherence to the Cross of Lorraine, the two men were made for each other and were made to understand one another.

But their alliance was based on something rather more than purely personal qualities. What completed their understanding of each other was the recognition by Malraux that (as the General had always believed) in the last resort only the nation, and the nation state, could provide men with a stage on which they could realise their potentialities to the full, and that for him, as for de Gaulle, France was the embodiment of the nation in its most perfect and classical form.

To Malraux's left-wing admirers such an admission was a form of mortal sin, a blasphemy against that idea of the solidarity of the international working class which had provided him with one of his most moving themes as a novelist. Yet in fact, as we can see now, they had no right to be surprised; for Malraux, whether as communist or *communisant* had always worn his communism with a difference; just as, one might say, in all his activities there was an element of the ambiguous and the ambivalent which, in some people's eyes, approximated to charlatanism.

Of this aspect of his life and character one may find many illustrations in M. Lacouture's book, and many others, of a more intimate kind, in his first wife's admirable volumes of autobiography. One is of particular interest. When Malraux appeared at the congress of the International Writers Association, it was as a militant revolutionary to

whom was attached the immense prestige of having collaborated with Borodin in organising the general strike in Canton in 1924; it was almost as if he had collaborated in the Russian Revolution itself. It is notable that Malraux never went out of his way to deny his participation in the strike and indeed at times seemed to corroborate it. In fact, however, he had never known Borodin, had never been to Canton, and had never been closer to China than Hong Kong.

Malraux's revolutionary activities in the Far East were confined to Indo-China, and, as M. Lacouture shows in great detail, were in no way inspired by communist policy or communist objectives. Rather, it was a propaganda campaign, conducted through the newspaper he helped to found, *L'Indochine*, to extend to the people of Indo-China the civic rights, summarised in the French revolutionary phrase *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*, which were denied them by the French colonial administration; and it was waged, by Malraux and his collaborator, Paul Morin, explicitly on the ground that it was both the duty and the interest of France to share with the colonial peoples the rights and privileges which her own citizens enjoyed.

Such a demand, in the conditions of French Indo-China at the time, was certainly revolutionary. But it had nothing to do with the kind of objectives pursued by Borodin and the Soviet government in China, and it was a demand with which General de Gaulle would have had no difficulty in sympathising at any period of his life.

Malraux's struggle with the French authorities was, inevitably at that date, unsuccessful, and *L'Indochine* had a life of hardly more than a year, after which Malraux returned to France. But his experience in the Far East, though short, had a decisive effect on his life; it transformed him from a slightly meretricious literary dilettante into a great writer and a man of action. What it did not do was to make him a communist, even if his words and actions sometimes seemed to suggest that it had; nor did it destroy the belief in the values of French civilisation which was eventually to make him the ally of de Gaulle.

In his writings on aesthetics, which have occupied so much of his mind, it has been one of Malraux's fundamental doctrines that one can never truly understand a particular work of art except in juxtaposition with other works of art, from different cultures and different periods. Perhaps something of the same process was at work in his experiences, short-lived yet so intense, in Indo-China. What he saw and learned of the civilisation of Asia served to throw into higher and sharper relief his understanding of his own culture. And is not French culture, after all, a work of art?

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AMERICAN CHRONICLE

Anyone for Paranoia?

By Joseph Epstein



"EVEN PARANOIDS have real enemies." So some years ago wrote the poet Delmore Schwartz, capturing in a simple sentence the crux of the most complicated problem in America today, when an entire nation appears to be living in a collective emotional state very near paranoia. Sufficiently deplorable on other counts, Watergate cannot be solely blamed for bringing

this about; its roots sink deeper. What Watergate has done, though, is to confirm the national paranoia, to normalise it, to make it seem a sensible response to contemporary events. America at present is a country in which nothing dreadful can be altogether disbelieved, and in which nothing hopeful can be altogether believed.

Not that paranoia is an entirely fresh phenomenon in American life. The late Richard Hofstadter, after all, entitled his final book of essays *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*. Writing in 1965, directly after the Barry Goldwater presidential candidacy, Hofstadter restricted himself to tracing the obsessions of the Right—anti-Masonry, anti-Catholicism, extreme anti-Communism. But as an historian of fine political balance, he noted that in America paranoia "is not a style of mind confined to the right wing." And since Hofstadter's book appeared, in fact, the reigning paranoia in America has been that of the Left. Its ascendancy is in large measure attributable to Viet Nam. Lost wars are not noted for bringing out the best in a nation, and among its other consequences Viet Nam swept the field of paranoia from the Right and gave it over to the Left, which, whatever its other sins, never approved the Viet Nam

venture. From the time that it became evident that the war in Viet Nam was a disaster through Watergate till now, in America left-wing paranoia has been in the saddle.

The American paranoias of the Right and the Left have less a fearful than a dreary symmetry. Where the Right fixes its obsessions on internal Communist conspiracies and creeping socialism, viewing such things as the spread of drugs and easing up on sex taboos as manifestations of a softening up of America for some Communist take-over, the Left's taste runs to a cartel of interests comprised of large corporations, the Mafia, the police, and whatever administration happens to be in power, all in league to keep the nation under firm control, soak it for profits, and further consolidate its already substantial power (which is roughly what the paranoids of the Right have all along believed its enemies are up to). These rivalling paranoias richly deserve one another, and let us leave them, locked in their discrete fantasies, grappling by the side of the road.

BUT WHAT IS a distinctly new feature of American life is more widespread and less psychotic. In a peculiar way, it is also less comforting, for it holds to no grand conspiracy theories, has no clear-cut enemies, and provides nothing of the false coherence that the other paranoias afford. It offers only the cheerless aspect of the sickness, the feeling of persecution without the compensating delusion of grandeur. Nor is it confined to politics. As a response to the world, it has seeped out, touching on larger and larger stretches of public and private life. Consider the following headlines from a single day's *New York Times*:

POLICE INSTALLING ALARMS IN STORES
SUBWAY CRIMES RISE 26% . . . MAN SLAIN IN
STABBING
SEX WITH PATIENTS DENIED BY DOCTORS
NEWSPAPER UNION ACCUSED OF BIAS
REPORTS OF LEADS IN MURDER FAIL TO REDUCE
ANXIETY IN FLUSHING

Or consider the following item from *The Wall Street Journal*:

A white man was stoned to death in Boston by 40 black teen-agers as he fished near a housing project. Two days earlier in the city six black youths forced a young white woman to douse herself with gasoline and then burned her to death.

With a story of that kind about, not much comfort can be gained from the large feature carried in the left-hand column of the same issue of *The Wall Street Journal*:

DESPITE ALL THE TALK LEGAL AND ILLEGAL TAPS
ON TELEPHONES ARE FEW

Do suspicion and fear, the staples of paranoia, play an inordinately large part in American life today? So vast a land, so heterogeneous a people, can any generalisation about us and our country hold up? One falls back, inevitably, on personal impression.

WHEN WALKING MY SMALL DOG AT NIGHT, I have come to take along a walking stick. A harmless enough affectation for one still slightly on the near side of middle-age living in the Middle West. Yet I do not take the walking stick along with me during the day. Does it, this stick, serve any purpose beyond those normal to a walking stick? In fact, it does. Although mine is not a neighbourhood noted for a high rate of street crime, my walking stick is along to ward off any potential attackers. It is quite beside the point that I have never been held up, mugged, "burglarised", or even had what might be called a close call. Yet when it comes time to walk the dog at night, I reach for my walking stick.

One night, around eleven o'clock, returning from the home of a friend, I find myself walking at a distance of twenty or so yards behind an elderly man. From what I can make out in the dark, he appears to be in his late seventies. He is thin and slightly stooped and wears spectacles. There are no discernible night noises on these quiet side streets, and my walking stick taps as it strikes the pavement. It is a fine night, cloudless and warm for the time of year. As I go tapping on toward home, the elderly man looks back toward me. Do we know each other? Does he mistake me for someone else? A few paces farther on, he looks back again. He quickens his step. I realise that I am menacing him on these streets at this hour. Evil luck has us headed in the same direction. He shoots back looks at lesser intervals now, and his terror is quite undisguised. I want very much to call out to him, to declare my harmlessness; but to call out in the night might only terrify him the more. Instead I decide to turn off down a street that is not my own.

This occurred neither on New York City's Upper West Side nor on Los Angeles' Sunset Strip, but in a fairly quiet suburb of Chicago, and its point is to show how far down the mood has percolated. Yet is it paranoia or good sense that is operating, both in my carrying a walking stick and in the old man's terror of me? Is it delusion, or are real enemies involved? It is not wholly clear. Over the past year there were more than 850 murders in Chicago, more than double the number during the City's peak in the 1920s, when Al Capone roamed Chicago's streets. Many of these murders were doubtless crimes of passion: husbands and wives shooting or cutting each other down, a youth taking a shotgun to his

parents, a man catching his lady friend out in an infidelity and gaining vengeance. Many were doubtless murders carefully premeditated, part of an elaborately planned crime for money or power. But how many were accidental—killings done in panic at the hands of a drug addict nervously intent on acquiring money sufficient for a fix, or of a bungling burglar, or a roving street gang of adolescents who go further than intended? The late W. H. Auden used to remark that, walking the streets of New York, he always made certain to have at least a \$5 bill on him to mollify any possible mugger, who, should he have come up empty-handed for his efforts, might choose to kill in anger. Under certain conditions of urban life, paranoia has become the better part of valour.

GREATER AND GREATER STRETCHES OF most large American cities have in recent years become quite simply out of bounds.

"The thing I have against the Blacks and the Spanish in America," a friend remarks, "is that they have ruined the slums." A piece of sheerest bigotry, of New-World colonialism, or so one might think; yet it is also a remark of terrifying accuracy. The plain fact is that, in America under their current residents, the slums have never seemed more wasted or wasteful. Although there is a natural enough tendency to become falsely nostalgic about immigrant life in the slums of thirty and forty years ago (especially once the immigrants have long departed them), nevertheless what is patently true is that before now America's slums were never anywhere near so sealed off as they are today. Sealed off, moreover, from entry as well as from egress. However few people get out—even fewer get in. In journalism and in sociology for some years now, American slums have been steadily referred to as "ghettos", a sad misnomer. The ghettos of Eastern Europe were, for one thing, not slums. Nor, for another, were they barred to those who might wish to enter them from outside for whatever purpose. If an historical analogue is wanted, the modern American slum more closely resembles the "Apache territory" of Hollywood Westerns—a landscape one passes through at one's peril.

Much of this is the heritage of the Civil Rights battles of the past fifteen years, which, in their later phases, took a turn that left confused and bad feeling all round. The turn was towards "separatism." Its political aspect was Black Nationalism. Its more general social aspect has been intense racial pride. Racial pride ought certainly not to be despised, especially following upon decades of intense racial shame. Yet so often among young Blacks (who no longer wish to be called Negroes) this new-found pride has

taken the form of belligerence towards whites—"manhood" for them has seemed frequently to hinge on displays of contempt, if not outright hatred, for old oppressors. For large numbers of white Americans, who never cared very much to begin with, this has made not caring now even easier. For others, who cared (and care still) a great deal, the result has been to dash any hope of cooperative Black-White work on any large scale. Too many possibilities for contretemps exist. Too heavy a psychological freight is being hauled about to make such friendships comfortable. Meanwhile, the man who ten or twelve years ago may have made out cheques in large amounts to the NAACP or the Urban League, or who pridefully watched a college-aged son go off to work in the Mississippi Summer Project, today notices three black youths approaching him on the street got up in "Superfly" outfits and inwardly winces in fear. Once more paranoia wins the day.

IF AMERICAN SLUMS have become Apache territory, other sections of American cities have come to seem very "Roman"—well into the decline. The impression in many such neighbourhoods is overridingly one of things running to seed: once carefully kept buildings fallen into neglect; iron grilles drawn across windows of once friendly neighbourhood stores; parks, phone booths, and other public facilities, once thought of as urban amenities, now used almost exclusively as gymnasias for vandals. Before so bleak a backdrop people tend to look sodden and to be sullen. The tableau is one of bleakest documentary—Hogarth without heart. Pretence, so necessary to the functioning of communities, seems harder to bring off here. The idea of a neighbourhood seems a thing of the past.

THINGS SEEM LESS immediately bleak in the newer suburban areas, but they are in the longer run no more cheering. Here, out amid the great freeways, one is in the heart of Franchise America—so named for the franchise motels, department stores, and fast-food restaurants that blot the landscape. The blot is one of uninteresting uniformity. In their suburban strips the cities of Pittsburgh, Detroit, Milwaukee, and nearly every other American city have become not only undistinguished but indistinguishable. All of which conduces to the view that while the old seems to be wearing away or going under, it is being replaced by something much inferior—even if in some instances it is a case of the mediocre being replaced by the drab.

An unmistakable sense of disintegration without any solid hope for reintegration—such appears

to be the chief motif in the United States at this moment. "The more things change the worse they become. . . ." In America, a country where before now a leading assumption has been that progress is unrelenting, this has for many been a staggering come-down. "Progress is a terrible thing," William James once remarked, and perhaps only now is his meaning becoming evident to his countrymen.

The feeling that things are breaking down only adds to feelings of helplessness. Inflation, pollution, energy-crisis, Watergate, the large débâcles are but part of the story. The small-scale difficulties, the quotidian horrors, perhaps contribute even more. Dealing with big corporations, for example, one feels one's negligibility with fiercer clarity than is comfortable. Everyone has his own war stories. A tilt—the Quixotic language is not inappropriate—I have been undergoing with an American credit card firm is possibly instructive. The details are unimportant, but that estimable Company has been holding \$60 of my money, and while they do not deny that the money is mine, neither do they seem to be able to find their way to returning it to me out of the inferno of their computerised accounting systems. Long-distance telephone calls, xeroxed documents, correspondence, sound arguments, passionate anger, all avail nothing, not even irritability on the other side. Politeness and silence, it has evidently been discovered, is the preferred way of dealing with people like me. Friends chortle, suggest I give up, walk away, forget about it. Although the \$60 will not in any serious way alter my life, I'm afraid I can't forget about it. Over such incidents are cranks made.

SMALLNESS, HOWEVER, is no warranty against inflexibility. A few weeks ago, on a Saturday morning in the suburb where I live, I found myself needing to cash a cheque. There are two suburban banks and getting to my own at that moment, what with the Saturday morning traffic of children and shoppers about, would have involved roughly forty minutes of wasted time. The other bank was near where I was when I discovered the need to cash the cheque. I went in, located a bank officer, and inquired if I mightn't be able to cash a cheque in a small amount, even though not a regular customer. "I am sorry," he said, no trace of regret apparent upon his face, "but this bank does not cash cheques for people who are not regular customers." Calmly, I mention that I am connected with the nearby university; that I bank elsewhere in the same suburb; that I have ample funds in my current account to cover what is after all a very small sum; that I certainly would not mind his calling my bank to establish this last point; and that,

finally, in cashing this small cheque for me he would be greatly facilitating my morning's errands, for which I would be extremely grateful. With boredom in his eyes, he hears me out, then says: "It's bank policy not to cash personal cheques for people who are not regular customers." Jumping directly from calm to rage, that special smouldering rage of the utterly impotent, I announce: "Bank policy? I see! It is, in other words, bank policy to be rigid! It is bank policy to be callous! It is bank policy not to go the least bit out of your damn way! It is bank policy to adopt a go-screw-yourself attitude toward all people not among your regular customers! . . ." I stopped it there, though if I were to have met with true resistance, which I did not, I was perfectly prepared to lecture upon the connections and parallels between bank policy and every 20th-century horror. Instead I turned my back and walked out, another passing paranoiac.

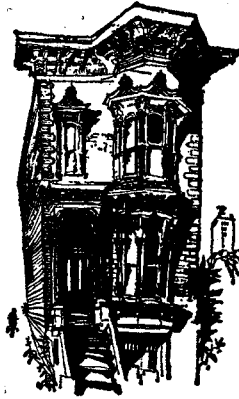
ONE FORGETS THAT goodwill can no longer be assumed, not even in dealings of the most minor sort. This is something fairly new in America, and, in a quiet way, it is devastating. Vaunted American friendliness—the ready handshake, the slap on the back—may have been nine-tenths pretence all along, but better the pretence than the unalloyed distrust one now all too often encounters. On almost every hand, the irritability quotient appears to have risen. If once an act of coldness or unpleasantness seemed worth marking, now an act of decency is. Where apathy is the rule, the merely helpful seem saintly. With the community increasingly felt to be a dangerous or daunting place, people withdraw into their families (the divorce rate is up), or into themselves (so is the suicide rate). What is happening here? Is America undergoing disintegration, or, a long stride beyond, living with its consequences?

In 1926, after a visit to America, Johan Huizinga wrote:

"The immense difficulties on the way ahead do not frighten them. The question of capital and labour, the crisis in agriculture, the urgent necessity of reforestation, the problem of irrigation, the Negro question and that of the assimilation of foreign immigrants, the increase in crime—we shall gain control over them just as we shall over the problems of transportation and automobile parking in big cities."

For those who enjoy their historical parallels tidy, Huizinga even spoke of an energy crisis of a kind at the time of his visit, remarking that not long before Senator La Follette had predicted "dollar a gallon gasoline," but that Americans seemed unperturbed. If petroleum runs out, he sensed the national mood to be: "we will make

other fuels." Huizinga found Americans possessed of a boundless—nearly, indeed, an idiot—confidence, which scores of foreign observers both before and after him had also noted. They would, alas, be able to note it no longer.



WHAT HAS GONE WRONG? Have the politics of trauma, under which the country has been living over the past ten or so years, finally begun to take their toll? What is behind the new national touchiness, draining of confidence, paranoia? A case of post-Viet Nam blues? Or something less ephemeral, something that has been boiling away for decades? How deep it

goes became personally clear not long ago when, during a trivial enough discussion of the magnificent American baseball player Henry Aaron (who this year is on his way to breaking Babe Ruth's home-run record), the 11-year-old son of a friend wondered aloud if Aaron mightn't be assassinated before the new baseball season began. Asked why he thought this, the boy remarked that it seemed to him that in America most heroes of any real stature were murdered.

Such reasoning on the part of a child shows America to be a nation under psychological assault. The chief assaulter is the country's own media. The effect of the media on the life of modern nations is a subject that awaits its Marx or Freud, though a Weber or Durkheim would do. In America the media's influence is particularly strong, and significant to the tone of the nation's public life beyond reckoning. Even in paranoid America it is pointless to attribute great malice to the media, as our recently rudely departed Vice-President used regularly to do. It is sufficient to point up the simpler fact that the media require trouble, thrive on scandal and aggravation, and could scarcely survive any extended period of national equanimity. The news-weeklies need cover stories, the evening TV news startling announcements, the newspapers daily disasters. "Hot copy" is the desideratum, and they have all of them become expert at acquiring it. The effect of the media's expertise is among other things to keep a stick jiggling in the ribs of their countrymen. To keep up with the news in the U.S.A. is to be kept constantly off balance.

Take, for example, the crisis-of-the-day in America—that purported to involve energy

supply. Were he alive and around, Huizinga would most certainly discover a vastly different response from that which he found in the 1920s. Rather than undaunted, he would find most Americans strangely unbelieving. He would find a large segment of the population holding the energy crisis in America to be a fake; another segment believing it greatly exaggerated; yet another segment believing it all a conspiracy (the conspiratorial elements differing according to one's political views); and perhaps the smallest segment of all believing the crisis to be real, unexaggerated, and brought about by honest negligence. Then Huizinga might have discovered another group, the ultra-sophisticated and quickly bored, already tired of the energy flap, and anxious to move on to the next big national crisis.

They will probably not be kept waiting long. The intervals between crises in America grow less capacious, and the discrete crises are themselves not so much solved as simply replaced in the national consciousness by other, fresher crises. It all makes for lively reading but rather jumpy living. One of its results is to give most Americans a feeling of being out of control, of being in no sense an actor in history but altogether the acted upon. "In a disintegrating society," Nadezdah Mandelstam writes in *Hope Abandoned*, "life is so unstable that nothing is predictable. . . ." That remark doesn't quite apply to current-day America, where life is dependably no longer business but crisis as usual.

IN AN ATMOSPHERE of constant crisis, it's best not to venture out. This may be sound psychiatric advice, but its political consequences are less clearly salubrious. Already one senses Americans pulling back from earlier political commitments. (The *New York Times* reports the results of a recent survey to be that New Yorkers are turning increasingly conservative.) Race equality, welfare, improved schooling—issues involving social justice scarcely stir conversations, let alone hearts. Not quite at its midway point, the journalists have licked the label and pasted it upon

the current decade: this is to be the "Torpid Seventies."

For some tastes it has been nowhere near torpid enough. The elaborate and embittered conclusion of America's involvement in Viet Nam, the plugging up of Vice-President Agnew as the fount of fundamental moral wisdom in America, energy and other worries, the unrelenting inflation, and above all Watergate—such events do not comprise most people's notion of a period of rest and relaxation. Yet it must be said that Watergate, except for its perpetrators, has become something akin to the national pastime. It has the advantage over baseball and professional football in being not seasonal. It's run on continuous performances for more than a year now. One goes to bed on the Nixon Administration's denial of various crimes, indiscretions, corruptions, then wakes in the morning to fresh revelations.

For the ample following that has hated Richard Nixon for more than two decades now—since his early "Red Scare" Congressional campaigns in California—Watergate has provided a field-day. From their point of view, moral outrage has to be pretence; after all, having hated the man so long and so thoroughly, they are hardly in a position to be truly shocked by anything that has come out of the various Watergate investigations. Yet shock of course they do claim, though behind their differing expressions of moral disgust it is not difficult to make out a clear and simple delight at witnessing an old *bête noire*—Tricky Dicky—on the griddle with the flames turned all the way up. The nature of their delight is in part that of having their paranoia confirmed.

Others, perhaps in a more advanced state, see Watergate very differently. While not in any sense devoted to—or even especially respectful of—the President, they nevertheless wish a sharp diminution of tumult in America. Talk of impeachment sends them into shivers. If they can't be said precisely to fear the future, they can find no convincing reason to be confident about what would be likely to follow the impeachment or enforced resignation of the President. ("Impeachment With



Honour" reads a currently popular automobile bumper-sticker, mimicking the President's own "*Peace With Honour*" slogan toward the end of the Viet Nam negotiations.) They do not dispute questions about the President's culpability in Watergate—it finally comes down to whether he was a knave or a fool, and neither is a very comforting alternative in a Chief Executive. Somewhat traumatised by the political and cultural upheavals of the 1960s, they've had enough of what one observer has termed America's "assaultive" politics. (Like the engineer Ilya Isakovich Arkhangorodsky, in Solzhenitsyn's *August 1914*, these people feel themselves trapped "On one side—the Black Hundreds: on the other—the Red Hundreds! And in the middle . . . a dozen people who want to pass through to get on with a job of work. Impossible!")

One other body of opinion about Watergate

exists in America today, though it is most certainly a minority. These are the people, certain editorial writers, television commentators, and professional optimists chief among them, who hold that at bottom Watergate is good for America; that it will keep the nation on guard against such excesses in the future; and that, once the air is cleared, everyone will be the better for it. But can the air be so quickly cleared. Will some measure of public tranquillity soon return? Or are those of us in America now too keyed to crisis ever to live normally again? Will these be known as the years when, in John F. Kennedy's phrase, "the tide ran out for the United States"? What a luxury it must be to view things straightforwardly. In America at this moment, most of us can't refrain from spending half our lives, in good paranoid fashion, looking over our shoulders.

from *The Horwich Hennets: 305 & 306*

Mammy made little men out of wool. Every thread
that began at the head ended up in toes
or in fingers, and cords drawn tight kept them spread
as a body. His hair was always cut straight
like a thistle and stayed as the maker chose.
She would sew on the mouth; she would imitate
eyes with crosses. Three bonds at the hips shaped
trunk and thighs. But as soldiers they wouldn't stand
up; as family, wouldn't sit down. They aped
walking only if someone would put a hand
to each foot. Best was hospitals, tucked in bed.
When you tired of that, they could always be dead.

On the roof of the railway sheds two hundred
yards away, saw a man hammering. He hit
at the sky with his hammer and it thundered.
When he hit the black roof as hard as he could,
there was silence. The vaporous and sunlit
cloud was banging the hammer back. It withstood
all his striving. Though heaven was echoing
like a vast girdered canopy, not a dent
could be seen in the free clouds that were blowing
in the delicate air; he couldn't prevent
the sun shining, nor shake the beams. The sole proof,
later on, was the fact he'd mended the roof.

Edmond Leo Wright

God's Own Haberdasher

"The State, in choosing men to serve it, takes no notice of their opinions. If they be willing faithfully to serve it, that satisfies."

—OLIVER CROMWELL

For him I fought and had my skull laid open
to the skies by some tasselled Royalist.
Now my General would do the same to me,
mad with blood-lust for the Irish.
Wearing sack-cloth for choice,
having fed on carrots, potatoes and water
these past eight years, I find my Lord Protector's
prison diet a mite epicurean—yet I am consumed
by Doubt, the cursed hunger.

—am I mad, or they who call me mad
who sin by their profits and speculations?
—are they not mad who go weekly to Church
to trade in *that House of the Whore's merchandise*
with its black-robed *Pimps and Panders*?
—are they not both mad and blind, those Doctors
idling at Cambridge and Oxford, *the Whore's great eyes*?
—are they not mad, the property-stricken
peacocks who titillate the palates of their jades,
who feed their maggotty corruption on their pound of flesh
duly exacted, who donate nothing to the poor
but cheap derisive bile?
—am I mad or are not Liberty and Justice
brought by the sword
but the pretence of a final solution?
My God, protect me from My Lord Protector!
Lord, satisfy my hunger: I did believe
that not Death but St John was the great Leveller.

I have conquered the power of blood
in myself: flesh is the enemy of the perfection I seek,
and no woman can summon up now the blood
in my member—
are they not mad who rule by blood
and are ruled by blood?

Roger Crab the Hatter is mad
my gaolers mock. Poor they may be,
but still barred by their mockery
from perfection.
I wonder.
In my cursed hunger, in my black
times I wonder
if my God has not been sent mad
by His Pity?

(Roger Crab, 1621?–1680, was one of the many religious radicals of his time, and is thought to have been possibly the original, 'mad hatter.'")

Ploughland

They drudged across the seasons' palimpsest,
The feathered horses, driven into rain;
Their dapples and attendant shades impressed
Upon the skies which pulled them up the lane.
 Light moves about the knotted ploughland, sown
 With undistinguished seeds of chalk and bone.

A sullen field, pegged out with brittle trees,
A water colour of the English school;
Her pawky hedgerows crumble to the knees,
The locked fires in her fractured flint lie cool.
 Old weathers broke her in, and we retrace
 The crows' feet etched on her dissolving face.

The lost teams and their leaders. All that care
Is mere commemoration by the wind.
A shower of bells freckles the cooling air;
Our booted feet drag with an awkward rind.
 Down in the levelled churchyard a few graves
 Remind the birds how well the past behaves,

Working along the bent flow of the land
With no more substance than our thought makes good:
A face limned on the air, a tenuous hand
To scribble in the margins of the wood.
 A rash of brickwork rubricates their claim:
 A foundered house, and a forgotten name.

The Home Farm lacked a tenant forty years,
Pigs littered grandly in the living room;
The rain is flighted with her children's tears,
A burnt tree's crater beckons to the tomb.
 One old man with his dog slows up the hill;
 A shooting party spaces out the chill

Where scatterings of green remind the day
Of beasts long cropped and felled: the molten dead
Still driving purpose through the common clay
In new returns of sacramental bread.
 The harnessed bells ride out upon their round,
 Tossing cold heads above the burdened ground.

Shapes of Things to Come

Daniel Bell's "Post-Industrial Society"—By JULIUS GOULD



PROFESSOR BELL has been trawling in dangerous waters—for many years from the Hudson, and now from the Charles. To identify, when data are often patchy, the main themes of advanced industrial society is an heroic ambition. It requires a *vue d'ensemble*

of classic 19th-century proportions. It demands (and in Bell's case the demand is met) a knowledge of the traps, classical, neo-classical and, yes, post-classical, that can undo the hero.

Spotlighting a social trend is, indeed, a hazardous business. If one traces out the obvious, one is accused of restating truisms in arcane terms. If one claims to penetrate below the surface, linking past, present and future, the historian suspects that the "facts" of the matter are being by-passed. Other sceptics will observe, with justice, that any description of social trends or forecast of social outcomes, is influenced, possibly tainted, by the assumptions of the social scientist himself or the milieu he seeks to please. "Trend-spotting" sociologists, old and new, build into their arguments, we are warned, a set of narrow hopes, fears, or aspirations and exclude from them, by arbitrary, undiscussed fiat, those possibilities which they or their masters dismiss on moral or political grounds. What is more, some exponents of what Maurice Cranston has called "the misbehavioural sciences" have sought, with hubris, to manipulate the future—and have made extravagant claims in the name of policy science,

systems analysis, and the like. Others have, in their forecasting, transformed *logical* sequences or stages into a tale of continuous empirical growth, governed by alleged internal "laws of motion." So Bell has chosen, if I may switch my metaphor, a rather rocky road.

He recalls that he first presented some of the ideas in this book some fifteen years ago—though, naturally he makes no claim to have invented the controversial phrase "post-industrial society."¹ He carries us through a formidable historical excursus and tells how his view differs from those, for example, of Ralf Dahrendorf, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Alain Touraine, J. K. Galbraith and countless others. To Bell's critics this must be a source of deep satisfaction as well as mordant, flickering annoyance. For does it not, they will say, confirm the conceit of the man—his assumption, possibly élitist in character, that his intellectual history is of interest to others. . . . Yet the background should not be so radically dismissed. For the book is the product, and in part the victim, of recent American history.

It was conceived in the days of Camelot—in the bracing air of those University-and Foundation-sponsored seminars on "the American Future"—occasions which, to be sure, boosted the egos and worldly importance of the participants and which aroused among the uninvited a frisson of envy and outrage. The hopes or illusions of the Kennedy days survived, *mirabile dictu*, into that Great Society over which Lyndon Johnson was thought to preside. It was an era of intellectual expansion and privilege, with a touch, here and there, of political ambition and moral arrogance—yet a time too, when honest men could believe in a better (though, let it be said at once, "structurally unchanged") future for many Americans, a future that would be shaped by social engineering, allied (where possible) to *charisma*, and marked by cool, rationally administered, social progress. That hope began to fade at Dallas. It was soon overlaid by the fires of Watts and My Lai and by the more mundane failures in Poverty Programmes and the like.

Bell's book, conceived, as I have noted, in

¹ *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*. By DANIEL BELL. New York, Basic Books, \$12.50: London, Heinemann £5.50.

² He notes that David Riesman had used the term previously in a somewhat different sense, and the words "post industrial state" appeared in 1917, in the title of a book by the Guild Socialist, A. J. Penty.

Camelot, appears in the years of Watergate. Thus in his concluding Coda Bell is drawn to grapple with cultural themes, unexpressed or dormant in earlier years—with the “participation revolution”, with the pessimistic yet radical ideas on education that have come from Christopher Jencks, with the complex (and yet over-simple) drive towards equality of social outcomes signalled in the work of John Rawls. Again, when the book was beginning the gospels of economic growth and scientific expansion were widely, even if critically accepted—and not only in America. But by the time the work went to press there was a widespread retreat from “science” (and cutbacks in its funding), a powerful current of primitivism and anti-élitism in intellectual and intellectualoid circles—and a general feeling (now converted to near certainty) that endless economic growth is neither feasible nor desirable.

WHAT IS “post-Industrial society?” Like any word or any phrase which denotes an ideal type, the idea spotlights both a situation and a view of a situation.

“I am dealing here with tendencies and have sought to explore the meaning and consequences of those tendencies if the changes in social structure that I describe were to work themselves to their logical limits. But there is no guarantee that they will. . . . The tendencies may provoke a set of reactions that inhibit change.”

The concept is geared to the changing pattern of occupational structure in America and comparable changes elsewhere. It is associated with the new status which “knowledge” enjoys in the countries of advanced industrialism.

“Post-industrial society is organised around knowledge, for the purposes of social control and the directing of innovation and change, and this in turn gives rise to new social relationships and structures which have to be managed politically.”

It also emphasises

“the centrality of theoretical knowledge as the axis around which new technology, economic growth and the stratification of society will be organised. Empirically one can try to show that this axial principle is becoming more and more predominant in the advanced industrial societies.”

America is now in

“the first stages of a post-industrial society. We have become the first nation in the history of the world in which more than half the population is not involved in the production of food, clothing, houses, automobiles and other tangible goods.”

In such a society the occupational structure is tilted towards the production of services—which, rather oddly, Bell calls “the erosion of the

industrial worker himself.”

“What is clear is that if an industrial society is defined as a goods-producing society—if manufacture is central in shaping the character of its labour force—then the United States is no longer an industrial society.”

It is marked, too, by the special rise to influence of the “knowledge-producing” institutions, especially the great Universities, and by a move from an “economising mode” to a “sociologising mode”, from a societal concern with economic growth and efficiency (underplaying, for example, the spillovers and external costs which E. J. Mishan has emphasised) to a concern with “broader social criteria”, transcending yet incorporating what is abiding and essential in the “economising mode.” That these are really *tendencies* is clear from the claim—certainly debatable—that the modern business corporation is the point of this transcendence. The society in which these corporations are embedded is “increasingly a communal society wherein public mechanisms rather than the market become the allocators of goods and public choice, rather than individual demand, becomes the arbiter of services. . . .” And this raises special problems of social knowledge and social priorities.

LET ME STRESS a number of things which Bell is *not* saying. He lists a “common core of problems which societies that become more and more post-industrial have to confront.” But he specifically rejects any doctrines of convergence or any global logic of industrialism.

“The response will be relative to the differing political and cultural organisation of the specific society.”

He does not believe (as too many American sociologists have believed) in overriding “system” drives.

“There is no ‘system’ which reproduces the existing division of labor in the next generation, but many different trends deriving from the diverse sources of occupational trends in the United States.”

What is more, his nascent or developed “post-industrial society” does not mean an end to politics, or to the conflicts which politics both creates and controls.

“It is more likely . . . that the post-industrial society will involve *more* politics than ever before for the very reason that choice becomes conscious and the decision-centers more visible . . . since politics is a compound of interests and values, and these are often diverse, an increased degree of conflict and tension is probably unavoidable in the post-industrial society.”

And though he defends his own sense of what he meant by “the End of Ideology” he never claims,

as some well-known philosophers have said he does, that in the house of science there is no need for political philosophy. On the contrary:

"We now move to a communal ethic, without that community being, as yet, wholly defined. In a sense the movement away from governance by political economy to governance by political philosophy—for that is the meaning of the shift—is a turn to non-capitalist modes of social thought. And this is the long-run historical tendency in Western society."

SUCH A THEME opens as many doors as it closes. Bell's "tendencies" cannot be quantified.³ And, certainly, the technical, scientific and professional groups do not form a coherent bloc. The interests derived from their functions are no more uniform than those of "businessmen." It would be sheer dogma to pretend otherwise—a dogma no more acceptable than the "mirror-image" thesis, found in vulgar-Marxism, that "business" has a monolithic or conspiratorial interest. But few would question that Bell's "tendencies" have, since World War II, become more intense and that the rise of the science-based professions presents clear fields for enquiry.

How, for example, do these groups relate to each other and to the different arms or layers of the political system? For whatever the current strength of "functional rationality" (and its prestige has dimmed of late) political power in the United States has not—as we shall see—been vested even in its most distinguished exponents. It could be argued also that (setting aside the important special cases of computer technology and military-oriented research) many of the "theoretical innovations" that have come to be applied were rooted in the "industrial" as distinct from the "post-industrial" epoch. In so far as this is so, it would suggest that the term "post-industrial" may, by denoting too sharp a break, at times produce misunderstanding. And the older "industrial" forces in society—corporate business and organised labour—seem remarkably alive and well, capable of a good deal of clout, directed at each other *and* at the rest of us. The wrestling that this induces *may* be under the influence of "functional rationality"—but it is also moved by old-fashioned concerns for profit, "money on the table", and the retention or acquisition of political power. No one who has lived through this political winter in Britain can see any triumphs for "functional rationality."

On all this I am not entirely reassured by Bell's recourse to the "sociologising mode" and its slow, gradualist influence on the corporate

order. That there is a *tendency* of that kind I do not doubt. But it will take political will if the joint activities (and inactivities) of big business and big labour are to conform to the communal priorities to which, like Bell, I attach importance. Just as there is a new disjunction between culture and social structure in our time (as Bell's *Coda* eloquently describes)—so there is another highly visible disjunction: between the narrowly economic, profit-conscious (and inflationary) bias of corporate industry ("both sides of industry") and the "public philosophy" that Bell espouses. One need not be "anti-business" to sense this difficulty—whether it be called "industrial" or "post-industrial" is of small importance. And it is a social fact that this difficulty arouses not only a just and reasonable concern but obsessive envy and archaic symbolism.

BEFORE I RETURN TO these wider issues, let me, by way of interlude and illustration, point to one key area where Bell does offer some very revealing "quantities." This is where he discusses one of the special features of the American case—the posture and responsibilities of the Federal Government *vis-à-vis* advanced and expensive technology, the core of the "knowledge-based" society. In recent years, he points out,

"America has taken on the features of a mobilised polity in that one of the crucial scarce resources, that of 'research and development'—and more specifically the work of the scientists and engineers in research and development—is tied to the requirements of the military and of war-preparedness . . . few institutions other than the government can underwrite such expenditures."

Elsewhere in the book this is quantified.

"During the large-scale expansion of R & D in the United States, the chief areas of Federal funding have been defense, space, and atomic energy. In 1960, these three agencies spent 91% of all federal R & D money. By 1970, however, even though the monies for these three agencies had increased, the proportions as a whole had shifted: yet in 1970, the three agencies still accounted for 82% of federal R & D monies. Health, which in 1960 spent 4% of the total, by 1970 had doubled in percentage terms and accounted for 8% of the monies."

Now, cross-national comparisons are notoriously elusive—but these figures suggest to me that America's post-industrial lead, if we abstract from military R & D, is less striking than might at first appear. I think Bell might agree with this. Political factors—which he himself notes—and other more "cultural" pre-dispositions are as relevant as the pressures within technology or within "knowledge" itself, whether theoretical or applied.

³ A demand for quantification comes ill from those who sensibly attack quantophobia in other fields, or from those anti-positivists who are seen to peddle the woolliest and most imprecise forms of nonsense.

It will be obvious that Professor Bell is bound to pose one of the oldest and most honourable of questions—that of the relation between Knowledge and Power. In modern society—where the links between the centre and the periphery are so thoroughly interwoven—there are, and always will be, two kinds of decision that have to be made: the technical and the political. We know that both politicians and scientists (for diverse reasons) seek to transform contentious problems which raise, or reflect, moral and political conflicts into questions that can be decided on supposedly “technical” criteria,⁴ by standards drawn from available expertise, from the realm of means, illuminated as those means may be by the glare of “hard” applied science or by the drier, more fitful light of the social sciences. The social scientists who explore (and need to explore yet more) the realm of institutional means are less and less attuned these days to the study of ends, and they feel much flattered by their potential usefulness to the men of power. They share this human frailty with their more successful brothers in the “harder” sciences. And the men of power always need “scientific” justifications for their strategies, tactics and U-turns. But, as Bell affirms,

“in the technocratic mode the ends have become efficiency and output. The ends have become means and they exist in themselves . . . the technocratic mode is bound to spread in our society.”

Just so do the means become ends in themselves—indeed they are interwoven into the assessment, determination, and mutation of social ends and purposes. The traumas and ambiguities which this creates for the physical sciences are illumined both by the fate of Dr J. Robert Oppenheimer and by the more recent debates over the Anti-Ballistic Missile programme—matters to which Bell gives sustained and informed attention. In the ABM debate, as is well known, “differences in quantitative methodology (technical issues) actually disguised a doctrinal difference . . . technical issues cannot easily be separated from political ones and scientists who come into the policy arena will necessarily be advocates as well as technical advisors.” Nothing could be more

plainly put—and *a fortiori* this is true of the social sciences. (It should be a key theme of social science education and should reinforce the need for modesty and circumspection in those disciplines.)

All this is not, in itself, a product of advanced industrialism. It is a logical facet of the relations between science, of all kinds, and all manner of politicians and bureaucrats—though it is heightened, of course, by the new responsibilities of political élites, their fluctuating self-assurance, the heavy demands made upon them by more educated and restless electorates, and the costs of modern technological activities.

YET—AND THIS IS OF supreme importance—for all their traumas, cushioned by well-funded research programmes, the scientists of Professor Bell’s America were not enthroned as the determinants of policy. “No matter how technical social processes may be, the crucial turning points in a society occur in a political form. It is not the technocrat who ultimately holds power but the politician.” Over the huge areas of American research provision there did not develop a unified institutional core that could “speak” for science.

“power in science policy has rested with the political and bureaucratic interests of the major agencies, Defence, Atomic Energy and Space—rather than with the scientific community, or even an overall political body for science.”

Again, very clearly spoken. All that effort, all that splendid R & D “motivated largely by ‘external challenge’ . . . to help the defence posture”—and none of it vesting the bonzes of the natural sciences with an independent power-base, a power-platform in scientific space.

Yet Bell, hoping for a long-overdue “Social Account” of the United States (something for which he has worked and pioneered), asks: “Will there be a similar effort for sustained support of domestic social needs and the long-range interests of science and universities in a post-industrial society?” Nothing, of course, is impossible. But my own answer would be—no, there won’t be. And even if there were, ultimate power would remain outside the “social accounts” community, just as it has eluded other much more cohesive and indispensable groups of experts.

THE ABIDING MESSAGE of this book is the power of politics. For Bell is no believer in a facile, technocratic dream, nor does he argue that science displaces politics. I have noted his recognition that, so far as non-Communist countries are concerned, “post-industrial” conditions will increase the intensity of political life.⁵

⁴ Witness the “technical” exertions of the British Pay Board over the “relativities” on miners’ pay; and witness the disregard of those exertions in the hasty political “settlement” of the dispute.

⁵ Those who see in this a retreat from the “End of Ideology” thesis with which Bell was associated—and which has been so wilfully distorted by critics—are welcome to their pleasure. In their excitement they should not overlook a note on page 34 of this book—in which, with exemplary patience, Bell says again what he really meant and, in fact, actually said on this matter.

Yet some difficult questions remain.

Does Bell, like so many genuine social democrats of his generation, feel less troubled than he should about the *shape* of that politics? Is this a zone where the future can really resemble the liberal past—either its image or its mixed reality, rooted in the rule of law? These are very worrying questions—certainly for many European countries, now entering a new time of troubles, and, I believe, for America as well. No one can slot into social forecasting the real autonomy of politics or the irrationality and unpredictability of élites or of masses. We cannot weigh the balance between the newer “participatory” modes and the risk of an authoritarian “solution” to our contemporary crises. The inflationary bias of post-industrial economies (into which Daniel Bell has deep insight) is shifting so many political, as well as economic, parameters. Paying the “inflation tax” is not an incentive to effortless economic contentment but a source of grumbling anxiety, with dangerous political consequences.

And it has reopened, in non-affluent times, the debate on social justice and the distribution of wealth. Alongside “post-industrialism” other forces have developed—a rational awareness of new inequalities as well as a counter-cultural mood (taken up, with a true *trahison des clercs*, by the vocal para-intellectuals produced by much “higher” education). All this has “caused”—and, in turn, necessitates—a greater sensitivity to alternative futures. It will be hard, after years of seduction by “promising” politicians, to develop a resolute politics of the possible—and one not geared to the mirage of constant growth. I mean a politics that recognises not just our search for knowledge and prosperity but our varied capacities for creation and for wickedness, for envy, for inertia and for self-deception. To raise these matters implies, I know, that Bell’s book, learned and informative as it is, mirroring as it does the decent self-consciousness of an era, remains nonetheless, incomplete. But then the business of society itself is not yet finished.

Ragtime Midnight

Innocent ragtime, pondered
By fingers that are heirs to
Generations of nicotine,
You are, in your sounds,
Measured to the medium tempo
Of ecstatic moderation.

Rigorously enraptured blues
May please me, but your
Respectability with a past
Is more my future. Or,
Trading in your memories,
You make me think it is.

Unpersoned pianos, sheet music
Open at *The Entertainer*,
Possess physical silence.

And, played in Joplin’s way,
The lawful fame of Joplin
Fills my midnight of wine

With the stage in the fields
Where the lost Ragtime Opera,
Performed twice daily,
Obsesses the devotees.
Obsolete toy, dear music,
Fit for Palm Court or tenderloin,

You are lighthearted enough,
And, being sounds, invisible.
In my mind you are source of
Visionary skins, fragile
As gas, plentiful. Jaded ivory
Retains your secret laughter.

Douglas Dunn

SCIENCE

The Mystery of Knossos

An Archaeological Controversy—By GERHARD PRAUSE



HE HAS UPSET a great many people, particularly the specialists in the subject, the archaeologists, which is not surprising in view of the fact that he claims that everything they have said about Minoan civilisation is totally wrong. He does not just put a sceptical question mark against the life-work of whole generations of archaeologists,

beginning with Sir Arthur Evans' finds at Knossos and his interpretation of them, but believes it to have been based on false premises from the start. This has led to a passionate international debate.

The specialists themselves, however, are noticeably keeping in the background. Instead of involving themselves in the fray, they would like to see this iconoclast discredited as a kind of archaeological counterpart to Erich von Däniken. But that is not so easy because, while the former hotelier Däniken, though he has become a world-wide best-seller with his claim that the Gods were Astronauts can be dismissed as a half-educated phantast,¹ the author of the provocative *Wohin der Stier Europa trug* (1972) is a scientist of repute. Professor Hans Georg Wunderlich holds the chair of geology and palaeontology in the University of Stuttgart. It is this that makes the affair so upsetting to many people. For he threatens to bring down the whole edifice of archaeological interpretation built up on the Cretan excavations in the course of seventy

years by shaking their very foundations, the point being that he does so in his capacity as a specialist in petrology, *i.e.*, an expert on rocks, their origin, structure, and durability.

It all started innocently enough with a visit he paid to the Palace of Knossos, which Sir Arthur Evans began excavating in 1900 and then, rather over-hastily, restored. A number of things struck him as peculiar. A sacrificial altar in the king's living room? Children's graves under the paving stones of the floor? Clay vessels as tall as a man, in the very small subsidiary chambers of the palace, containing 75,000 litres of olive oil to supply the royal household? These were only three of a whole series of oddities that made him doubt the archaeologists' theories about the alleged life of gaiety led in the 4,000-year-old Minoan palaces. What he now has to say about Knossos, Phaistos, Hagia Triada, Mallia, and Zakros contrasts glaringly with the experts' hitherto unchallenged views, for he is convinced that the famous Cretan ruins are not the remains of palaces, the residences of kings or princes, or warehouses—but "palaces of the dead", or more specifically "cult buildings of complicated design for the worship and burial of the dead." He published his theory for the first time in March 1971 in a paper entitled "Das Geheimnis der Minoische Pälaste Alt-Kretas" in the journal *Naturwissenschaft und Medizin* (No. 36). A report in the German weekly *Die Zeit* led to a debate that still continues.

THE BEWILDERING COMPLEXITY of the Knossos site, with its more than a thousand chambers, caused it to be connected with the Greek tradition of the labyrinth of the legendary King Minos, and a high degree of civilised comfort and convenience was attributed to it, including bathrooms, running water and WCs. Frescoes led to the assumption that a life of sporting elegance, beauty, and worldly gaiety prevailed. The excavators' imagination quickly led to such melodious names as "royal villa", "throne room", "Queen's bathroom" being given to different features of

¹ See the critique in *ENCOUNTER*, "Anatomy of a World Best-Seller", August 1973.



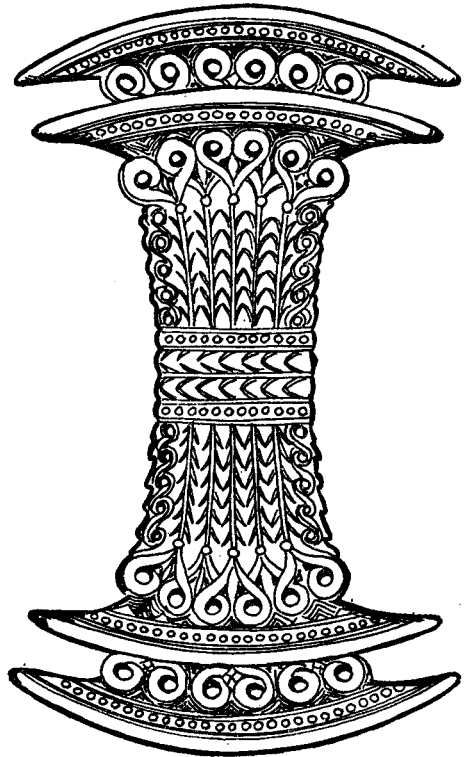
the site. The principal argument with which Wunderlich counters this picture of Knossos as the centre of Minoan culture is the total lack of evidence that it was ever lived in, though (apart from the consequences of the destruction presumed to have been caused by the Santorin earthquake of about 1500 B.C.) the remains were strikingly well preserved. This is remarkable in view of the fact that the principal material used in these buildings was alabaster. But this alabaster is nothing but gypsum in a partly compacted partly crystalline form which (according to Professor Wunderlich) is so soft that it can be scratched with a finger-nail, and above all is porous to water. At Knossos this gypsum was used, not only for walls, but for supporting columns, doorsteps, and even stairways, even in rooms where many hundreds of servants are said to have been housed. And all this is completely intact, *i.e.*, the typical signs of wear are absent. Only where contemporary tourists flock today have the slabs of alabaster had to be replaced with concrete.

Professor Wunderlich writes,

The "new palace" of Knossos is said to have lasted from about 1600 B.C. to 1450 B.C. In such a long period, even if a harder stone had been used for a building with such a numerous staff of servants, a building employed for official purposes with permanent public access, signs of wear would be discernible on the stairs and paving stones. Even if the inhabitants went barefoot, quartziferous airborne dust under the soles of their feet would have left traces of wear. True, it might be conceivable that part of the paving was renewed shortly before the final destruction. But this cannot have been true of steps and doorsteps that are now stratified under masonry blocks some of which weigh many tons, and therefore must have been there from the beginning.

This led him to believe that the whole place could really never have been lived in at all, and his belief was strengthened by the fact that the chambers with alabaster paving were almost permanently closed.

GYP SUM WAS EXTREMELY UNSUITABLE for the room known as the "Queen's bathroom", for instance. Why was so much of it used at Knossos? Wunderlich wondered. Why were the much-discussed Minoan wooden pillars plastered with gypsum, though such treatment diminishes the durability of the timber? Why was a special type of pottery developed there, its bronze-coloured surface hardly distinguishable at first sight from metal? This is the famous "egg-shell pottery", which is unsuitable for practical use. Why are many of the double axes (the emblem of the Minoan kingdom) so thin that they would bend if they were ever used to strike? Why—as every tourist can see for himself—are most of the rooms windowless and only a few yards square, and why do all these palaces (apart from the always recurring central courtyard) lack grandeur? "Here, then," Professor Wunderlich writes, "King Minos and his consort are said to have lived in semi-darkness in the indirect light of an airshaft, and the ladies of the court are said to have sat over their needlework, busy with spindle and distaff, in a six-to-eight-yards-deep pit the size



of a room. . . .’ And why should the ruler of Knossos (in whose palace one looks in vain for kitchen and dining rooms, or stables for horses and chariots) have kept 75,000 litres of olive oil—according to an estimate by Sir Arthur Evans—in the vessels mentioned above?

Professor Wunderlich believes that all these difficulties can be cleared up if the whole of this strange site is regarded as a realm of the dead, “a site at which commercialised preservation of the dead was carried out.” The bodies of important or merely prosperous personalities were placed in clay sarcophagi shaped like chests or baths (such as have been found elsewhere in tombs containing human remains). But Sir Arthur Evans jumped to the conclusion that the sarcophagus next to the “Queen’s living room” was a bath, which it is still generally held to be today. The chief argument continually adduced in favour of this is the so-called drainage hole at the bottom. Professor Wunderlich’s reply to this is to ask: What is the point of a drainage hole if there are no water pipes in the so-called “Queen’s bathroom”? and why should this room be paved with gypsum which, as already mentioned, is easily permeated by water? He cannot believe that the Minoan builders could make such a crude mistake—because elsewhere they made what were unquestionably water conduits out of limestone, which is so much more resistant to water. Wunderlich also draws attention to other baths—similar to the “Queen’s bath”, but so small (between 80 cm. and 120 cm. long) that an adult could not bath in them—which are preserved in

the Sarcophagus Room in the Heraklion Museum. They are all imaginatively painted and, like the box-shaped sarcophagi, have “drainage holes.” Professor Wunderlich believes them to have been ventilation for mummies placed in the boxes in a crouching position.

He believes it necessary to abandon the erroneous idea that

“the Minoans were the inventors of bathroom luxury. The unique, rather deep, alabaster-covered ‘lustral chambers’—regarded, according to taste, as underground shrines, bathrooms, or places where sacred snakes were kept—were nothing but the places where the clay sarcophagi of the important dead were put, *i.e.*, they were the real burial chambers. The generally bigger rooms next to them—often they were several storeys higher, so that the cult rooms above were connected by many steps with the burial rooms below—served for the cult of the dead and the keeping of grave goods.

Thus Professor Wunderlich definitely accepts the conjectures voiced early on by Spengler “that the ‘palaces’ of Knossos and Phaistos were temples of the dead, shrines of a tremendous cult of the life beyond.”

WHAT OF THE MANY VESSELS that have been held to be containers for oil, wine or legumes? They too, according to Professor Wunderlich, were used for burying the dead. Such *pythoi* containing human remains have been found in other ancient burial areas. The larger opening at the top (as broad as a man’s shoulders) and their lesser convexity and greater breadth at the bottom distinguished them from the real oil containers. He explains the presence at Knossos of clay sarcophagi and burial *pythoi* as representing two different classes of burial at different prices, such as are known to have existed in Egypt. The bodies of important persons were embalmed, desiccated, and wrapped in binding material. Protracted and laborious practices were involved, and Professor Wunderlich regards this as the explanation of the elaborate system of wells, water-pipes, and drainage channels in the Minoan “palaces”; *i.e.*, they were installed “for preparing the dead for embalmment.” He adds that “the so-called light shafts which are said to have illuminated the deep interior of the palaces with ‘magic indirect light’ were primarily ventilation shafts without which the deep burial chambers would hardly have been accessible for lack of fresh air.”

The dead were given gifts such as jewellery, but also objects of everyday life. As these were not really needed, imitations would serve the purpose, like the gypsum which was used for the floor instead of marble slabs. By such means the whole expensive business of caring for the dead was to some extent kept within bounds. The grave-goods and the gay, vivacious frescoes



(similar to those in Etruscan burial chambers) were to enable the dead in their dwelling places to continue to take part in earthly life.

WUNDERLICH'S THEORY certainly meets the difficulties I have mentioned in the previously accepted interpretation of the Cretan archaeological finds. It also provides answers to other questions, *e.g.*, that of the unusual trades mentioned (in Linear B script) on the clay tablets found at Knossos, such as headband-maker, salve cook, incense bearer, myrrh gatherer, or (female) bath assistant. The numerous statuettes of women with bare breasts and raised arms that were found are not evidence of "freedom of manners", nor were the women "priestesses of the snake cult." They were wailing women who bared their breasts as a sign of grief, like those known to us from Egyptian burial chambers. Also the total lack of any defence works at Knossos and the other Minoan palaces—hitherto explained by the alleged pacifism of the Minoans or, alternatively, by the assumption that they were so powerful that no one would have dared attack them—is explained simply by Professor Wunderlich as follows:

Nobody would dream of surrounding a cemetery or palace of the dead with defence works. The dead no longer can—or need—defend themselves.

Finally, his theory also explains the puzzling observation that, in contrast to nearly all other ruined historical sites, no "parasite settlements" arose on the sites of the Minoan palaces after their destruction. For centuries these places were surrounded by the sinister aura of death.

LOYAL SUPPORTERS of the Evans theory reply to all this by asking why, if the Cretan palaces were "cities of the dead", no bodies have been found. They point out that mummification was unknown in the Greek world; the bodies of the dead were either buried or burnt. Wunderlich replies that the mummies are missing because the burial chambers were plundered in antiquity.

As it was narrow and dark in the labyrinth, which made the grave-robbers' work much more difficult, they smashed the coffins and the clay vessels,

dragged the mummies out into the open, and removed the wrappings to get at the jewellery and the death masks. Thus Evans found only a relatively minute residue of jewellery (as well as cult vessels and votive offerings that were useless to the grave-robbers). . . . The grave-robbers seem to have got what they were after. Round the palace, concentrated in the vicinity of the former exits, there is a pile of bones and fragments of *pythoi* several yards high.

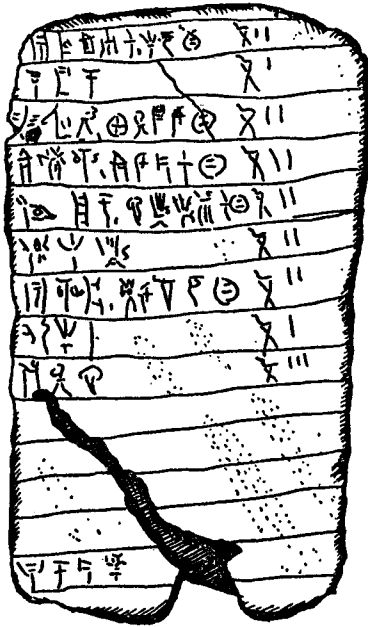
In offering his explanation of why the practice of mummification did not survive in Crete or elsewhere in the Greek world (and why well-preserved mummies did not survive in Greece, though they survived in large numbers in Egypt), Professor Wunderlich also answers the much-discussed question of the sudden end of the Minoan civilisation. In the first place he suggests a revolution in burial customs.

In the restless times of the "Dorian invasion" and the inroads of the sea peoples of the end of the second millennium B.C., robbing graves and palaces of the dead became normal. To avoid the desecration of graves the widespread practice developed of burning the dead, together with all the grave goods, and (at any rate, at first) after a scrupulous anointing of the body. Also the damp Mediterranean climate of Greece was much less favourable to the preservation of mummies than the rain-free desert climate of Egypt outside the settlement area of Upper Egypt, where the cities of the dead were built at the edge of the desert.

When one recalls the Egyptian Pharaohs' tremendous fear of grave-robbers and the expensive security measures they built into their burial places—the long, false passages leading to false tombs with false sarcophagi—this theory may well sound convincing.

IN THE *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (9 November 1972) Professor Wunderlich was described by the retired Marburg archaeologist Professor Friedrich Matz, one of the leading German authorities on ancient Crete, as being "not completely aware of the methodological presuppositions essential for a social-scientific discipline." But the chief criticism of the so-called "Sunday archaeologist" was directed at his gypsum theory. The onslaught (after the publication of his first paper on the subject) came from





Professor Walter Noll, in the Swiss journal *Antike Welt* of March 1971. Professor Noll went to Knossos to test the Wunderlich theories on the spot. He brought back a "sample of polycrystalline, coarse-grained gypsum" and had its resistance to grinding tested according to the "Kuznetsov method" by Professor Haussühl at the Institute for Crystallography of the University of Cologne. Professor Noll reported that

The experiment showed an increase in the mass of the gypsum instead of a loss of weight. Thus the resistance to grinding is in fact higher than it would appear to be. With reference to our problem, this means that abrasions of the second and third degree are less apt to appear in the gypsum used in Crete than one would expect from the gypsum's resistance to fissure alone. . . .

Professor Wunderlich replied, or rather wanted to reply, but the *Antike Welt* refused him the space. His answer was subsequently published as an appendix to his book. "With this method," he argues, "the corundum powder used as an abrasive is forced into the surface of the gypsum and, as it were, 'seals' the soft gypsum against further wear. This effect is especially to be expected when there is a high degree of difference in hardness between the abrasive material and the material being tested." He also remarked that corundum powder and similarly hard abrasive material cannot have formed part of the "resources usually available in the palace of Knossos."

Vital in this connection seems to be a statement by Professor Haussühl, who tested the piece of gypsum submitted by Professor Noll. In a letter

to Professor Wunderlich he wrote: "The answer to your question whether, in my opinion, gypsum is a suitable material for steps in much-used buildings is obviously no. But if no other building material were available, a gypsum floor would be better than a wooden one." Now, as Professor Wunderlich points out over and over again, other building material *was* available, and it was used by the Minoan builders wherever heavy usage was expected. So the gypsum controversy still remains open.

ANOTHER QUESTION, which I myself raised in an article, also remains open. If all these sites, *i.e.*, not only Knossos but (as Professor Wunderlich believes) also Mallia, Phaistos, Kato Zakro, Niru Chani, and perhaps also Mycenae, Tiryns, Pylos and Troy, are to be regarded merely as "copies"—as mirrors of reality—the question arises of where the *original* was. Where and how did the Minoans, who indulged in such an extravagant cult of the dead, actually live? Does it not seem remarkable that this shadow world of gypsum, this huge remembrance and memorial industry, which for economic reasons worshipped and preserved a great many *ersatz* objects which were far too fragile for real use, should have



survived for thousands of years while the more robust originals, the solid things of everyday life, the real double axes, utensils, houses, temples and palaces of the living disappeared without trace? Everywhere there are traces of an exaggerated cult of the dead, but there are few traces of the dead themselves, and none whatever of real life. This seems a puzzle, and perhaps it will never be solved.

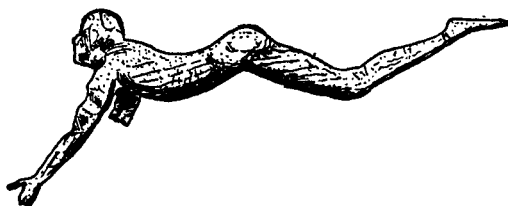
In a hitherto unpublished letter Professor Wunderlich replied to me as follows:

"Your question where the ancient Cretans lived if they did not live in the palaces arises, of course, also in the case of all other known Stone and Bronze Age cultures of Europe. In spite of the large number of megalithic tombs and cult monuments, our knowledge of the dwelling places of the living of those epochs is extremely thin. Even until well into the Iron Age the traces of real dwellings in Europe (as well as in Egypt, for instance) that have come down to us are very meagre. The slow extension of the use of stone for building homes for the living was not the result of lack of technical knowledge (graves and ritual structures demonstrate early familiarity with stone as a building material). The explanation is rather to be sought in the traditional view that homes for the living were not intended to last for ever. . . . Only tombs and places of worship were built to last, and stone was used because of its durability. Whether exten-

sive towns in our sense of the word existed in Bronze Age Crete seems to me to be unproved. . . . Nevertheless the first urban settlements no doubt arose by the seashore. In this connection it is important to point out that there is indisputable geological evidence of not insignificant flooding of the coastal areas of Crete in post-Minoan times (as well as elevation of the land in places, e.g., the cliffs to the south of Lefka Ori in western Crete). I have, therefore, suggested that areas along the flat coastline of Crete that have had a sinking tendency since the Minoan age should be examined with the aid of the methods of underwater archaeology in order to establish where the coastline ran in the Bronze Age (with the possibility of discovering the remains of ancient settlements). . . .

Perhaps some time this suggestion will be taken up. But whatever one may say about Professor Wunderlich's theory, it has been shown that a great deal of the hitherto accepted interpretation of the Cretan palaces, and of our view of Minoan culture as a whole, is unsatisfactory. It would seem that the time has come to subject the whole Cretan problem to radical re-thinking—from the legend according to which Zeus in the form of a bull carried off the Phoenician Princess Europa to Crete, to the still mysterious downfall of the Minoans.

Illustrations (8) H. G. Wunderlich



At the Surgery

Give me a specimen. I will boil it up.
The doctor's meander patterns of small sharp blows over the back.
His mad books on their asylum shelves.
Leave your hat in the lighted cupboard.
The turbulent nose-garden, with its salty flowers,
The accomplished gymnasts of the winter grate.
Give me your specimen. I will boil it up.

I kissed her hairy slippers.
I made a holywater ice-pencil.
I dipped the red egg in the slippery custard.
"Your shirt is drugged, doctor!"
"Give me a specimen. I will boil it up."

Peter Redgrove

FILM

Beyond the Excremental Cinema

By Alexander Walker



IN AN earlier ENCOUNTER article ("The Case of the Vanishing Bloodstains", March 1973) I referred to the vision of the "disintegrating man", citing John F. Kennedy's assassination in Dallas as an image that has run through the movies of the last decade with iconographic vividness. But the medical materialism that the cinema added to its view of death hasn't stopped here. It has affected the other bodily functions in ways that, while not so mortal, are probably less mentionable and until relatively recent times were certainly not viewable in the commercial movies. Once you burst open the envelope of skin that contains a man's identity, you are in duty bound to continue your investigation, and goodness knows where you may come out. The memory of Nathanael West's young hero, Balzo Snell, springs irresistibly to mind; appropriately enough (in the context of this article) he chose to approach the Trojan Horse of Western civilisation through its posterior opening. Significantly, he was compelled to forget his dignity and at the end of his intestinal journey found that he had lost much else, too.

What must strike any persistent film-goer—critics are the worst offenders here—is the screen's growing involvement with the capacity of man to define himself and his society through his own degradation. The heroic personality has been dismantled years ago—indeed it would have been surprising had it survived all of a piece in an age so violently at war with itself. But the anatomy lesson isn't nearly over: in fact it's hardly begun. Once flesh and blood proved materially and commercially malleable to make a

moral point (sometimes, anyhow) involving the slow-motion depiction of bloody slaughter, then other precious bodily essences and fluids are opened to inspection and exploitation. They are ones—and they reside in places—that are appropriate to the unheroic postures in which modern man so frequently fixes his identity, on the screen at least. All life, it's been said, is a return to the womb. Really? one replies politely, concluding that, if so, then it must have missed its direction, since it is clearly headed for less salubrious regions of the psyche and the physique. The stools of kings used to be examined for the omens they held: in a more democratic age, at least one film has constructed itself with the same material issue in mind and indeed in view.

The involuted indignity and savagery of much mass entertainment which feeds on the theme of degradation has a lot in common with Nathanael West's infinitely more rarified view of mass contamination and individual ineffectualness. One would wager that West, to judge from the films I shall presently examine, is all set for the Great Rediscovery treatment lately lavished on F. Scott Fitzgerald, significantly a contemporary labourer of his on the Hollywood "dream dump." Professor Alan Ross, in his introduction to the 1957 edition of West's collected works,¹ found the writer's slightness of reputation at that time not easy to understand and he put it down to the possibility that West's ruthlessness was "too near the bone for an American audience with a mass neurosis and a guilty conscience." He had made society "undisguisedly repulsive and meaningless." No one can say that society today is unready, or even unwilling, to have such evidence presented to it for self-recognition. If Scott Fitzgerald seemed to be the historian of the heedless affluence of the kind we were lately passing through, then Nathanael West clearly appears to be the soothsayer of the desperation that has sprung, with the suddenness of Present Shock, out of the same illusion of security and endless plenty. One wonders what West would have felt had he been spared his fatal car crash to see (or even collaborate on, for he would today be only in his early 60s) some of the cinema's visions of disintegration that have extended his own perceptions of what Professor Ross called "those x qualities that, midway between germs and tremors, lurk anonymously feeding on individual frustration. . . ."

LIKE *The Dream Life of Balzo Snell*, the film *Last Tango in Paris* is a journey through the anatomy of illusion. Though in this case the "material man" enters a narrower landscape of his own neuroses and perversions—"perversions" one should recall here, were once defined as

¹ *The Complete Works of Nathanael West* (Secker & Warburg, 1957.)

things that one hadn't done oneself, yet—at least he enters it, like West's hero, through the anal regions. He confirms the baseness of his own identity in order to exorcise it, and he does so through a couple of fundamentally anal acts that push the moral crisis of the character, played by Marlon Brando, to the outermost limits of physical abasement. Brando is an actor who has done some of his best work along this frontier. The business of being a film star in America is so profoundly dissatisfying that some natures substitute masochism-in-performance for the satisfactions that elude them off the screen. Brando is one of these. But appropriately enough, he has had to wait for his first truly European film to go "the whole hog", as his character in *Last Tango* would encourage the compliant flatmate played by Maria Schneider to do. Interestingly, the act of fellatio never figures in the movie. (It's hard to imagine its omission had the film been an American production.) It might have connoted the woman's worship of the man's "maleness", whereas the intention is not to sustain him but to vastate him—and the moment when he compels the girl to accompany the act of buggery with a stream of associative obscenities surrenders language to the Id with a power that is Dada-esque in its intensity.

One recalls that the first edition of West's *Balso Snell* bore Schwitters' manifesto—"EVERYTHING THE ARTIST SPITS IS ART"—as its epigraph. Bertolucci's emphasis on everything that the genteel consider obscene might lay him open to the same charge of disdainful mockery as the Dada-ists incurred, were the integrity of his film not so soundly lodged in Brando's performance. In other ways the film has neat Dada-ist allusions—Bertolucci is pre-eminently a literary and painterly talent—and especially in the marvelously imbecile "clockwork" tango where Brando's impetuous baring of his buttocks on the dance floor is the pure gesture of scandal that the Dada-ists championed. Bertolucci may have directed that moment: I doubt if he inspired it. Brando's signature is all over the film.

Last Tango in Paris has the character of a voyeuristic autobiography on Brando's part. Not, of course, in the act—but in the thought. As Norman Mailer has pointed out, all the illusions the character runs through in the extemporised soliloquy when he is lying recumbent beside the girl refer to the multitude of roles that Brando has played in his earlier films. But whereas he assumed an identity when he put on the mask of the character in these films, in *Last Tango* he strips himself fictionally naked in a way that makes it immaterial whether he ought to have laid himself physically nude—a point that seems to have irritated female chauvinists. The aim is

the same in word as deed: self-degradation. Brando's view of the world is summed up when he shows his arse to it.

TO UNDERSTAND HOW DEEP *Last Tango* goes in its legitimate exploration of man's sense of his own indignity, you have only to compare it with Liliana Cavani's new film *The Night Porter*.

The Night Porter shows that ideas walk—or, in this case, crawl—where the simultaneous appearance of similar themes is concerned. It begins in a semi-grand Viennese hotel, mid-1957, when the night concierge, an ex-SS man played by Dirk Bogarde, is recognised by—and himself recognises—a guest, a former concentration-camp inmate, played by Charlotte Rampling, whom he had taken pleasure in torturing physically and mentally during the war. In the end they come down to a closed-room relationship reminiscent of *Last Tango* in which the two people push each other to extremes of sadomasochism involving his chaining her to the wash-hand-stand lest his ex-Nazi affiliates kidnap her, and her making him walk over broken perfume bottles in the bathroom in his bare feet. The notorious "butter sequence" from *Last Tango* is echoed in the climactic tussle between the two—by now besieged in their apartment by his cronies—in which Miss Rampling, transfixed by the pains of night starvation, makes a lunge for the remaining jar of strawberry jam and she and her lover-torturer roll over and over, fighting for possession of the spreading stickiness, until, with her assistance, he at last achieves what can only be, given their relative positions, cathartic ejaculation. After which, all that remains is for him to don the old SS uniform—handily, perhaps thoughtfully, preserved in the closet—and for both of them to be gunned down on one of those long bridges that *Last Tango* made fashionable for doomed lovers' meetings.

Maybe *The Night Porter* requires a feminist reaction; some women certainly find it more persuasive than I did; it probably subtly flatters the female resentment of being "put upon" by the male by pushing it to such extremes. Otherwise, the taste for each partner's perversions is so underexplained that one suspects the director felt that listing them, depicting them, and working through them would be sufficient. It is possible, of course, to see it in Jesuit terms, rather than those of De Sade—"Give me a girl at a tender age and she is mine for life." But such explanations, sceptical or not, flatter the film's own short-term aims which, I suspect, were to depict a relationship solely in terms of its abnormalities, particularly its physical and bodily aberrations, without really examining it. Where *Last Tango*'s abiding impression is that

Bertolucci knew exactly what to leave out, the makers of *The Night Porter* were intent on calculating what to put in. It would be hard to know what could be taken out of Bertolucci's film without harming it irreparably: very easy to guess what could be removed, if the law or censorship in any country so insisted, from Cavani's film without anyone missing it.

THE SAME THEME OF DEGRADATION, stripped of any of Bertolucci's compassion, is what animates the current trade in "pop-porn" in the United States; and given time, it would be instructive to watch the interchangeability of art and pornography as represented by *Last Tango* against, say, *Deep Throat*, or *Behind the Green Door*, or *The Devil in Miss Jones*. I doubt, though, if it will be given time, as the judgment of the U.S. Supreme Court on what constitutes pornography has already been handed down and the appeals against the local communities' law-enforcement officers are already beginning to work their way up the judicial system again. Another 18 months to two years seems likely as a limit to the so-called "permissiveness" that at present shows few signs of abatement in the United States, to judge from the brazen ubiquitousness of the "pop-porn" movies even in what were once "the best neighborhoods."

Charles Reich's "greening" of America would appear to have been indelibly succeeded, for the moment anyhow, by the "blue-ing" of America. The *Los Angeles Times* applies a tone of its own to the advertisements its pages carry for the "Pussycat" and other theatrical chains where the hard-porn stuff comes to rest, often for many months before the police act, though it is now moving into the drive-ins and the motels where one price is made for rooms with movies and another (and higher) one for rooms with movies and a waterbed. The *Los Angeles Times* prints the porn advertisements a lighter shade of grey than the "legitimate" cinemas which retain their jet-black respectability. (Presumably only the masturbator's eyesight is at risk in this perfect compromise between morality and profitability.)

What the porn movies have in common, besides their anatomical freakishness, is the explicitness of sexual ejaculation, now visibly portrayed as an earnest of authenticity—the trade calls such demonstrations "come" or sometimes simply "cum" shots. Where pelvic thrusts and erect members were deemed sufficient a few years ago, visceral evidence is now wanted as guarantee that the act is not a simulation. The "candour" of such shots is frequently lauded by the manufacturers of such pictures. All of those I spoke to in a recent visit to Los

Angeles deplored the absence of similar candour from *Last Tango*, despite my argument that the mental, not the visceral emphasis in that film ensured it had its priorities right. (I am bound to say, though, they would have a point if they reproached *The Night Porter* for similar coyness.)

Such films are interesting for what they are not. They are not fetishistic, in spite of unrivalled opportunities. They go straight to the act, more or less. Perhaps the almost universal absence of underwear on male or female bodies robs the fetishist impulse of one starting point at least. The major examples in the field are not homosexual, either. The reason seems to be that hard-core porn movies are dictated by the audiences' tastes—not *vice versa*—and the audiences for them are generally young, rarely black, mostly married, and overwhelmingly heterosexual. (Ironically this means that overtly homosexual movies suffer less from police interference than those which are believed to have a more widely inflammatory appeal!)

I have found none of them erotically stimulating to the slightest degree. They only serve to remind us, sadly perhaps, how limited are the number of ways of achieving sexual pleasure: after the umpty-umph repetition of the few standardised acts, even curiosity droops. (I have observed more interesting variations on the cabin wallpaper of one Asian commercial airline, inspired by the traditional couplings and triplings of indigenously erotic philosophy, than I ever saw in a moving picture at ground level.) Perhaps what they have added besides the release of semen is the release of wit in the porn movies. One is grateful for the temporary relief of the gag line in an otherwise unvarying cartoon of human lasciviousness—like the latecomer (no pun intended here) at the orgy in *Deep Throat* who surveys the post-coital sprawl and, distinguishing a familiar feature of one of the participants, asks "What's a joint like you doing in a nice girl like this?"

The illusion of "living cartoons" is paradoxically stronger than any plausible representations of reality in most of these porn films. Here again the anatomy is relied on for the exaggeration that must be put into cinematic animation as well as sexual exhibition if the customers' thirst, which is fortunately periodic and not satiational, is to be slaked. In the case of Linda Lovelace, the best-known star of the genre, heroine of *Deep Throat*, the exaggeration consists of a misplaced clitoris which isn't sited in the usual place, but somewhat south of her epiglottis so that for poor Linda to find fulfilment as a woman, the sex act must be oral. This is not just a tawdry excuse for depicting fellation—though it's that, *too*—but a necessary variation on an act that's now so

commonplace in publicly exhibited movies that it has only a residual medical interest—the state of unnatural relaxation required in this case by Miss Lovelace's larynx in order to obviate "gagging."

More and more the functions of the body stand in for the performance of the sex act that was once supposed to represent the breath-catching ultimate in cinema. As the porn movies trade "upwards"—a reaction to the legal situation threatening them as the body politic comes slowly into conflict with the body phallic—the commercial movies (or, rather, the "legitimate" cinema, since porn is highly "commercial") are steadily plumbing new areas of the bowels and the intestines to define *their* attitude to life.

La Grande Bouffe (or *Blow-Out* as it is known in Britain) postulates its view of man entirely on the breaking point of his bladder and bowels. It's the non-sexual functions of the four male friends gorging themselves to death in a Paris mansion which dominate Marco Ferreri's film. Where food was used in *Last Tango* as a means of lubrication, it is an instrument of self-annihilation in *La Grande Bouffe*. After a rough passage at a Cannes Film Festival Press conference in 1973, Ferreri has become notably more reticent about the "meaning" of his film. But he claimed then—I see no reason to improve on his claim now—that the gourmandising is an allegory of bloated Western capitalism, contrasted with the ascetic Marxist (or more probably Maoist) East which is represented by the Oriental visitor who offers the guests a flask of quick poison to save them the trouble of a slow death by gluttony. It need only be said that as allegories go, it is a banal one and Ferreri's degree of imaginative dexterity is no match for what it needs, namely the horrible deftness of Luis Buñuel. Ferreri is a man, to use his own metaphor, who ties a bib round his neck and calls for elbow room as he squares up to what's on his plate.

Although sex takes place between and even during courses, the accent of interest is not on "Come and spend it" but on "Come and get it." Constipation, not fornication, is what affronts the eye. (Predictably, the women guests at the feast hold out better than the men.) As the men sink in pools of their own excrement, expire in hurricanes of farting, or grope their way through the fall-out from an overtaxed lavatory, the view of man in society, defining his role in the system, simply refuses to refine itself out of Ferreri's point-blank view of four guzzlers. One critic has perceptively recognised the resemblances between the plot's ingredients and De Sade's *120 Days of Sodom*—food being substituted for humanity. But the overpowering feeling of *La Grande Bouffe* isn't the exploration of every kind of

sexual experience, which De Sade details, so much as the harping on one type of very infantile gratification. All the men to some degree revert to infantilism. Marcello Mastroianni attempts to insinuate the manifold of his Bugatti sports-car into his mistress the way small children often embarrassingly fiddle with unfamiliar toys. Philippe Noiret's judge appears to have a housekeeper indulgent to his need to be breast-fed and he collapses at the end on to a proffered pair of warm human breasts after failing to make any headway with their simulacra in pink blancmange. Even the Michel Piccoli character, embarrassed by his convulsive anal detonations, attributes his shame to the childhood admonitions of his mother. In short, the competitive cramming of food into tummies, the fixation with dirt, the flushing and the farting all recall the polymorphous perversions that Freud discerned in the infantile child. The outrage in *La Grande Bouffe* isn't inflicted on a compliant girl, but on the domestic larder; but the oral gratifications are markedly similar and it is this aspect of *La Grande Bouffe* that is sensed and resented by people who otherwise see it simply in terms of vulgarity and indecency. It reminds me of Maurice Sendak's far superior fable of Mickey, the little boy who got baked in the batter ("Stir it! Scrape it! Make it! Bake it!") and was almost popped into the oven until he escaped in the nick of time to fetch some nourishing milk "so we can have cake in the morn." The oral eroticism is more artfully—and artistically—sublimated in the Sendak illustrations: but *La Grande Bouffe* might appositely be titled *In the Night Kitchen*.

IT CAN ONLY BE A MATTER of time before this trend reaches its logical conclusion. Indeed, I am not sure if it hasn't done so already. Bodily functions—vomit, urinating, masturbation—play a large part in the shock of *The Exorcist*. The devil had previously only sought a tenancy in the womb, as in *Rosemary's Baby*. How predictable and inevitable that evil should now be manifested through the less mentionable orifices of the human anatomy. But we still await the film on cannibalism which Polanski seemed to be bracing himself to give us a few years ago in *Donner Pass*, a project about pioneers entombed in winter snows. He has still to get round to it. Meanwhile *Soylent Green*, an underrated film as far as the accuracy of its prophecies goes, has constructed a world, increasingly like our own in the apocalyptic energy crisis, in which cadavers are briskly recycled into "people's pabulum"—an idea Nathanael West would have relished for its neat reversal of the Christian belief that bread becomes the Host in the mouth of the faithful. In this case, the faithful become the bread.

"THE BODY AND ITS USES," is a title we might give to the increasing materialism of a cinema that has little faith in the spiritual and is feeling the exhaustion of its own sexual permissiveness. A feeling of collapse is emerging even here as more and more *outré* stimuli are applied to audiences to evoke a response from them. Maybe the screwing down again of sexual taboos by legal censorship in various lands is needed to invigorate audiences jaded by the turbulent permissiveness of recent years: compulsive opposition to such measures as those lately proposed in the Cinematograph and Indecent Displays Bill, for instance, is better than phlegmatic *ennui* at having "seen it all." Even so, the metaphor that art makes for society has a baleful significance as one watches the exhaustion or perversion of so many of man's physical functions.

The logical end is his reduction to being a function of someone else's direction; and even here the cinema has given us the distant early warning in the movie *Westworld* which postulates a parallel, man-made universe within our own into which tired mortals can escape, as holidaymakers on a package tour, to refresh themselves with artificially created sex and violence. "Westworld" in the film is architecturally built along the most traditional lines of American "Westerns", though of course it also lends itself to the interpretations of the "Western World." Its inhabitants are programmed robots, androids of impeccably human appearance (except that they tend to have computerised vision), on whom the last indignities of flesh and blood may be inflicted by the visiting humans with the comforting knowledge that such automata can't fight back. Apart from their programmed non-lethal natures, they have all the bodily functions, including the sexual, that humans have; and if mortally injured in a gun battle, or by an impulsive human rapist, a spell on the lab-bench while scientists repair their audio-animatronic innards puts them to rights again, ready for the next day's fray. Man's splendid capacities for transcending and reproducing himself have thus been shrunk into a console-controlled world of *doppelgängers* and transmission systems.

The theme of a society in which people are manipulated for others' gratifications and rewards is perhaps a reversal of the microcosmic world in *Last Tango* where two people made a compact to explore themselves for their own physical satisfactions; but the one follows from the other. As *Westworld* discovers, however, no system is perfect. Just as carnal knowledge ironically promoted love in *Last Tango*, a flaw in the system frustrates the manipulative perfection of *Westworld*. At this point obsession with the self

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gives way to concern for the world around it. Which at least is some comfort.

IT IS MORE THAN can be said for most of these films. With the dazzling exception of *Last Tango In Paris*—the only one to have got the mutual exploration of mind and matter in revealing and nourishing adjustment—what they represent, indeed what they flaunt, is an increasingly opportunistic displacement of interest from human relationships to bodily functions, from intangible emotions to the all-too-physically present viscera and fluids and tissues.

We are given a vast amount of information about the characters' innards, but a decreasing amount about their inner lives. The truth is that, in most of the cases I have mentioned, they have none. Which is why their conduct in films like *The Night Porter* and *La Grande Bouffe* and *Deep Throat* throws us back on ambiguities, narrative obscurities, and sheer guesswork which don't seem so much the film-makers' intention as their lack of concern for the psychology as opposed to the physiology of their films. In overtly porn pieces, like *Deep Throat*, etc., this is probably only to be expected. For after all, porn has historically turned human beings into sex objects. But the example is an infectious one today, when the screen can show almost anything it likes before the local DA moves in on it (and even afterwards). What we are increasingly discovering is that even in the "big commercial" picture, the characters are merely functions of physical organisms, and without much mystery. There are hardly half-a-dozen lines of serious dialogue in *The Exorcist*, despite the fact that it appears to be a wrestling match for the souls of the afflicted child between God and Satan. Instead, there is a great deal, a surplus in fact, of "body language,"

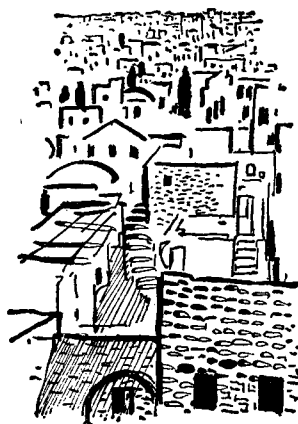
the invasion of the child's physical frame by Satan and all his 57 varieties of punishing (and photogenic) phenomena which manifest themselves in urination, vomiting, scars, wounds, messages for help emblazoned on the skin, a furred tongue, a head that swivels 180 degrees, loss of weight until levitation is attained, and a gain in strength until the child's slap packs the power of a heavyweight boxer. The film's value lies in its shocks and these are centred totally on the ills that flesh is heir to. Its spiritual interest has become simply a minor dimension of the flesh's metamorphosis.

IN THIS AND OTHER films, one is even denied the satisfaction that comes from the primacy of the senses. For the senses are no longer the prime movers of events. They are acted upon, rather than acting upon. They are residual to the reflexes. They are mere appendages to the much flashier things that the anatomy can be shown getting up to. The people are akin to "Action Dolls", those internationally popular simulacra of human beings whose powers of plastic mimetism enable them primarily to do the things that human beings do, and do them particularly well. At first it was smiling and crying and squeaking; then voices were added; then the sexes were specifically differentiated by the addition of the respective organs; and now the accent has been put on the functions of urinating and even defecating, until the "Dolls" excel in areas of intentional or involuntary behaviour that most human beings prefer not to acknowledge publicly or, at least, socially. The screen simply shows larger sizes of "Dolls" in action. The body is given a licence to do its own things—and the waste products of the body have become the prime material of the drama.

NOTES & TOPICS

Letter from Cairo

By Peter Schmid



I SIMPLY HAD TO go out and look at the historic landmark. There is nothing to mark Kilometre 18 except a burnt-out tank with its gun pointing oddly eastwards. Here the wheel-marks on the black asphalt road to Kantara turn off into the sand. Our Russian jeep begins to rock like a ship out

of control, so if we want to go on, we have to get out and push. At Malesh we can go no further. The gently sloping sandy desert lies before us, and soldiers black against the vivid blue sky are still to be seen digging themselves in.

A kilometre away, the Egyptian captain who is our guide tells us, are the Israelis. Not a step further, he warns us. The enemy enjoys firing at civilians. As we shake our heads in disbelief, firing does in fact break out, first single shots then whole machine-gun salvos. The next day the paper reports that there has been another minor breach of the ceasefire.

We try to run back to the jeep, with difficulty because our feet sink in the sand. The desert is already swallowing up the remains of the battle, which lie about like broken toys in an untidy nursery—the steering wheel of a Skyhawk with its ornithological emblem, but no sign of the rest of the body, bits of aeroplane spread all over the place, neat work by a SAM-6. And beside this massive destruction, the surprising contrast of Israeli Centurion tanks without a scratch. Six of them stood at the entrance to the ruined city of Kantara, smartly lined up as if for exercises, one of them still in netting.

We climb up the towers and look through the open slits, the inside still loaded with ammunition. “They simply ran away,” says our Egyptian captain. “The glorious army they once had is no

more, with their weather shelters at the Bar Lev line and their automatic napalm sprays at the press of a button. They are luxury soldiers. We are not afraid of them any more. . . .”

These comfortable fortifications are now a pile of rubble, as if battle had raged over them for days on end as at Verdun. They were taken almost intact, but the Egyptians promptly blew them up. The Kantara fort looks like a gigantic piece of Pop Art. The roof of the commando bunker had been strengthened with rails torn up from the nearby railway from Jerusalem to Cairo. In an explosion the weapon-packed trenches and flying rocks had fallen in the shape of a martyred face, and these rails formed a sort of spiky halo round it like the one on the Statue of Liberty in New York harbour. The fat colonel who came with us to have a look can barely find words for his excitement. “Do you know why the Israelis left here without a fight?” he finally asks triumphantly. “Because this is not their earth. It’s ours!” He bends down, picks up a handful of sand and presses his lips to it with emotion.

Towards late afternoon I have had no lunch and feel hungry. Behind the barbed wire the beautiful blue canal gives me ideas. “Any chance of Suez *truite meunière*?” I asked one of the occupying soldiers. Surprisingly he answers, “Plenty. This is a fantastic place for swimming and

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fishing. The fish have been flourishing undisturbed for six years now. . . ."

THERE IS STILL a certain cosiness about this army, however professional they may be in the course of duty. A sentry did not salute our captain, but when he saw him he ran to him and kissed him on both cheeks through the open car window. On the Western side of the Canal the army spills over into the peasant population who have been working their fields among dugouts, tanks, and supply trucks, while the black-veiled fellahin women still drive their shaggy sheep in clouds of dust through the paraphernalia of modern warfare. They appear peacefully unaware of the world-historic crisis.

In their attempt to break through, I was told by a UNEF officer in Cairo, the Israelis had sent in hundreds of tanks to the West bank in the last ten days of the War. Every day things had looked worse on the road from Cairo to Suez. If fighting had broken out again it was easy to see what would have happened; a lightning attack on the North, through these shepherds and simple soldiers, and on to Port Said, and then the Second Army, making such patriotic noises on the other side of the Canal, would have been in a position as hopeless as that of the Third stationed below it near Suez. Dr Henry Kissinger had been able to

avert this tragedy by his conciliatory skill. The Egyptians were spared the hard lesson in military strategy the Israelis had meant to give them, and an illusion of victory was preserved.

I DO NOT KNOW whether General Adli Sherif himself believed the theories he put to me and a friendly ambassador over lunch—that the Israelis rather than the Egyptians had been in a tragically hopeless position. Nothing about the cutting off of the Third Army. He only mentioned two small enemy companies in key positions cut off by the Egyptians. Why all this prevarication?

Here truth is riddled with complex human ambiguities and has only a tenuous relationship to what we call a fact; it may be much closer to a lie (or what we in the West would call non-fact). Even the firmest friend of the Arabs must have shaken his head when, for example, Cairo only published the list of Jewish prisoners-of-war unwillingly and piecemeal, and thereby put their Third Army in danger of Israeli reprisals when they needed food and medical supplies. Was such behaviour purely irrational, or were they hiding something? Egyptian propaganda worked hard to convince the world how well they were treating their wounded enemies in the Military Hospital. When the fighting was at its fiercest they sent home the diabetic pilot Avidan who, together with nine

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other POW's, had been imprisoned in Cairo for four years. Adli Sherif serves as the Army's international liaison officer with diplomats and prisoners; he treated the homebound pilot with every kindness, invited him to a meal at Groppi's, the Swiss de luxe restaurant, and took him to the bazaar where he spent some £30 out of his own pocket on gifts and souvenirs.

"The Israelis have humiliated us for six long years," the young general said to me. "We were consumed with shame for our defeats. Now that we are the victors and have proved we can stand up to them, we no longer bear any grudge. We can treat our opponents as equals, and even meet them with generosity. . . ."

Perhaps some of this is rhetoric. Friends of Egypt who love the unheroic softness of its people, believe that in peacetime this national characteristic will reassert itself and it will be like waking from a bad dream of aggressive Nasserism, "just as in Europe the Italians learned to forget Mussolini." Like General Adli Sherif, the rest of the team engaged in making the peace (and seeking reconciliation via America), from the General Chief of the General Staff Shazli to El-Sayed Ismail Fahmy, the Foreign Minister, come from ancient families who checked the power of the dictator and move within generally humane traditions and European educational

standards. Abdul Nasser is taken to have been a resentful plebeian who wanted to "destroy and recreate", and through his desire for historical greatness dragged his country through one disaster after another. Sadat, his successor, seeks rather some form of a harmonious balance and is in any case not a militant, not a fighter. Surely it will be easier to talk to men like this.

"*C'est le ton qui fait la musique . . .*"—the tone makes the music. Probably more than we think will depend on small details, even on trivial nuances, in the further talks on the ceasefire and the peace. Adli Sherif was the Egyptian officer who was the first to hold a direct conversation with the Israelis. It was "not all pleasant." He makes a point of mentioning a discussion with long-haired 18-year-old soldiers who took the initiative and invited him to speak. Then a jeep drove up with an angry Israeli officer in it strictly forbidding him to talk with Israelis. Shortly afterwards a subordinate came up with the news that General Bar Lev awaited the Egyptian Brigadier at the Israeli outpost. "When I had got Shazli's agreement by telephone," he told me, "I presented myself to the Israeli general with my smartest salute, and I asked him extremely politely what he wished. When he answered, it was in terrible English, with a strong Russian accent! Just like our former Russian advisers. . . ."

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The issue was directly, perhaps roughly, put by General Bar Lev. Why had the Egyptians opened fire on a freight convoy with supplies for the Third Army? It was just not put "in the right way." Clearly in this "Oriental milieu" still full of traditional formalities, the more unpleasant the subject of the conversation, the more politely it should be approached in order to sweeten the bitter pill to come.

"At first I was shocked and bewildered by the rudeness," said Adli Sherif. "But then the history of our-thousand-year-old civilisation ran through my head like a film at lightning speed and I had a momentary vision of a future full of hope. Then I calmed down and looked at the intruder and his turbulent visage—and I pitied him. . . . 'Poor man from Kiev,' I said to myself, for that's where Bar Lev comes from, 'poor man from Kiev, what do you want with this oriental earth where you will always be a stranger?' . . ."

THERE ARE ALSO other and non-Jewish "poor men from Kiev" who face an uncertain future now that they are no longer popular with Egyptians who are eager to be reconciled with

the Americans. "I hope that when Kissinger has got the Israelis off our backs, he will also free us from the Russians," a man in Cairo said to me. "We can't just throw them out," said another. "They helped us return to Sinai. We can't turn against them straight away. We should wait a little while. . . ."

I suspect that the Russians are not particularly alarmed by such passing ingratitude. Trushin, the head of the Tass agency, to his credit be it said, was the only colleague who remained in his enormous Zamalek villa throughout the critical period and never lost his optimism. "More bloodshed would only harm both sides," he said, and this may well have been a victory for common sense.

"There is no question of another war. For a long time now I have written no more about it. I write only about the economic consequences of the peace, and Moscow prints it. . . ." America is backing an Era of Reconstruction, and the Russians are following suit. The country can use all the help it is offered, and each in his own fashion. A decade of "competitive cooperation" in the Middle East, should peace be really established, could set the whole world an example.

Frogs at Lake Bolsena

Having come down and run the car into sand
Not a foot from the reeds, the tense changes to
The Italian present and stories of Montefrascone
Are right for the first perambulation—
Only a few plastic bags floating and the smell
Of burning in the hills mild as eleven o'clock:
Then the frogs start—out there in the shallows, one
After another, clamouring against official nature.

For nature is official here, its privilege extended
To recalcitrant weeds and momentous blossoms—
The Miracle of Bolsena struck from an open sky
And like the sunset the Host ran blood: what then
Can prevail upon the gentle waters, calm and bloodless,
When Christ's sanguinity fills the slaughterhouses
And the bone-dry churches? A corpse in damask
Holds the unsyntactical silence of despair.

Invisible and croaking in their plainness, the frogs
Speak of a similarly certain pain never
Lessening, and of the will to bring new pain
After, which this Italy has squared into art,
And which pilgrims with books in their hands try
To exorcise by long looks at lakes, judging
The far bank and marvellous islands until
The picture is captured and killed for their dreams.

Peter Porter

History & Archaeology

Arnold J. Toynbee

History as Paradox—By ELIE KEDOURIE

ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE is eighty-five this April, and though it is almost two decades now since he retired from Chatham House the works which he has continued to publish attest to the vigour of his mind, the width of his interests, and the facility of his pen. His career as a writer began before the first World War, and the books by and about him amount now to a small library. Toynbee is not a mere academic historian writing for a mere learned audience. He is, rather, a popular writer, but not because he has set out to write what are called popular books. On the contrary, the work which established his worldwide reputation, *A Study of History*, is of such length and complication that it requires a great deal of leisure to follow, comprehend, and digest its author's reasonings. As G. R. Urban told Toynbee in a recorded conversation:

"... Your popularity in America astounds me, for your *Study* is very exacting reading; it demands a grounding in the classics which is not one of the qualities American education favours. Yet your *Study* is not only read but definitely fashionable. The same goes, to a lesser degree, for Germany, where the classical background is, of course, much more firmly established."¹

Urban is undoubtedly right. Since the appearance of its first three volumes in 1934, *A Study of History* and its abridgment by D. C. Somervell have been reprinted many times, and the continuing popularity of the work is shown by the publication quite recently of a new, lavishly illustrated, one-volume edition, revised and abridged (in collaboration with Jane Caplan) by Toynbee himself.²

¹ *Toynbee on Toynbee: A Conversation between Arnold J. Toynbee and G. R. Urban*. Oxford University Press, \$5.95, £1.50.

² Oxford University Press in association with Thames and Hudson, £8.50.

In his foreword to this new abridgment, Toynbee declares that he has been working on *A Study of History* from 1920 to 1972, and indeed not the least interesting aspect of his work is the way in which Toynbee has never ceased to reflect upon his enterprise, to explain and justify his historical method, and to modify—in small and great things alike—the grandiose panorama which he began to unfold before us forty years ago. Anyone who reads consecutively the ten volumes of *A Study of History* will easily discover changes in mood and tone, as well as in argument and classifications between the first six volumes published in two batches in 1934 and 1939 respectively, and the last four volumes published in 1954. These ten volumes were followed by another, published in 1961, entitled *Reconsiderations*, where Toynbee bent once more over his work, endeavouring to modify it in the light of further reflection and reading, and to respond to objections made by his numerous critics. And the abridgment of 1972 shows that the author continues to brood over his handiwork, seeking to improve its appearance, increase its cogency, and make its message clearer and more forceful.

BUT SUBSTANTIAL AS ARE some of the changes which *A Study of History* has undergone from 1934 to 1972, Toynbee still adheres to a view of history which first occurred to him as long ago as August 1914, and on which he has built his imposing and complicated edifice:

"The year 1914 [Toynbee tells us in his foreword] caught me at the University of Oxford, teaching the history of classical Greece. In August 1914 it flashed on my mind that the fifth-century BC historian Thucydides had had already the experience that was now overtaking me. He, like me, had been overtaken by a fratricidal great war between the states into which his world had been divided politically. Thucydides had foreseen that his

generation's great war would be epoch-making for his world, and the sequel had proved him right. I now saw [Toynbee adds] that classical Greek history and modern Western history were, in terms of experience, contemporary with each other. Their courses ran parallel. They could be studied comparatively."

This passage is crucial for understanding Toynbee's enterprise. His starting point was an analogy between the Peloponnesian War and the War of 1914-18, and it was the pursuit of analogies between different periods and places which would seem to have made Toynbee into a universal historian. *A Study of History* is thus perhaps better entitled, by analogy with Bishop Butler's famous book, *An Analogy of History*. This urge to compare—and to classify—clearly means that the ideal of Toynbee the universal historian is not a narrative, based on all the available evidence, showing how all events are related to all other events in the past—an ideal which Meinecke sums up by quoting Leibnitz's motto, "*Tout est conspirant*." Events Toynbee seems to consider a veil behind which lies the true reality for which the historian is searching. Again, what men have suffered and done, infinitely various and perpetually surprising as it is, does not seem to interest Toynbee in itself. He is (he tells us) in search of "underlying permanent and uniform facts of human nature." He believes in "the uniformity and constancy of human nature", and considers this to be the "objective criterion" by which the historian must endeavour to be guided. For Toynbee, it follows therefore, a man is not (as Hegel believed) the series of his actions—actions which he has the choice to take or not to take. He does not believe that man's nature is his history. Man for Toynbee rather exemplifies the workings of a uniform and constant human nature, of which his actions are specimens or instances.

*Où sont des morts les phrases familières
L'art personnel, les âmes singulières?*

But, in this perspective of Toynbee's, Valéry's question remains unanswered. The specificity of a human act, the singularity of a human life, must somehow be drained of their substance and significance. This perhaps accounts for what in other historians would be a dismissive and insouciant attitude to historical evidence. Discussing with Urban the *Survey of International Affairs* which he edited for many years for Chatham House, Toynbee declares:

"I have had the curious experience of having written, in the '20s and '30s, about events on which the documents have since been published. Certainly when the inside material becomes available . . . things look very different."

To an ordinary historian this gap between what he had written and the actual evidence would be

very disturbing, if not utterly devastating. Toynbee, however, shrugs off the discrepancy with a pyrrhonism: "... do you ever", he asks, "get the full story?" Together, then, with a firm belief in "objective" laws at work in historical events, Toynbee evinces great, if not radical, scepticism about our ability to know the actual course of the events. This scepticism seems reinforced by his belief that "We can't help having unconscious axes to grind to some extent." An ordinary historian might think that in historical discourse what counts is the evidence, and the arguments derived from the evidence, and that about these there can be nothing "unconscious"; in short, that it is what the historian says which signifies, not his motive for saying it. But for Toynbee, it seems that the evidence is never complete, and the historian's motive is always suspect. Can history under these conditions ever be a respectable enterprise?

THE READER OF TOYNBEE'S WORKS is perplexed by other paradoxes. *A Study of History*, we remember, has its origin in a comparison between the Peloponnesian War and the first World War. This comparison did not remain a hermeneutic guess, opening new vistas of enquiry, and serving to inspire and illuminate. It became rather the foundation on which Toynbee erected his gigantic analogical construction, in which "models" are built and tested, and "specimen" compared with "specimen."

The purpose of these operations, we are told, is to discover "whether or not there is a standard type to which [these specimens] conform, notwithstanding their individual peculiarities." The specimens which Toynbee believes to constitute intelligible and comparable entities are those societies known as civilisations. Toynbee argues that they are constant and absolute objects of historical thought, that each one of them is an objective "intelligible field of historical study." This language serves to impress us with the idea that civilisations are more real, more tangible, more dependable than other subjects of historical research. On this point Toynbee is very emphatic:

"Such political communities (national states, city-states, and the like) are not only narrower in their spatial extension and shorter-lived in their time-extension than the respective societies to which they belong, but their relation to these societies is that of inseparable parts to indivisible wholes. They are simply articulations of the true social entities and are not independent entities in themselves. Societies, not states, are 'the social atoms' with which students of history have to deal."

But we soon discover that these large and solid entities, these ultimate "atoms", these wholes

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which are said to be indivisible, have, paradoxically, no more (and no less) substantiality than other historical individuals—a state, or an idea, or a tradition—which historians fashion out of their evidence.

On Toynbee's own showing these indivisible wholes turn out to be eminently divisible. In 1934 he counted 19 civilisations. By 1961 these had proliferated to no less than 32, and in the one-volume abridgment the total stands at 34. To an ordinary historian there is here nothing surprising, for his work consists precisely in making historical identities (which can never be exhaustively listed), and in specifying their *differentiae* according to the evidence, which is never a fixed quantity, and always equivocal. "Civilisations", for such an historian, are not more real or "objective" identities than states or churches or corporations or statesmen. History is no doubt a seamless web since all events somehow or another touch all other events. But life is short and seams have to be made. There is, however, nothing to prove that one seam is more privileged than another, that a history organised in terms of civilisations is inherently sounder than histories which adopt some other organising principle.

Is the historian of Cromwellian England, or of First World War diplomacy *ipso facto* inferior to the historian of any of Toynbee's civilisations, for instance the "Egyptiac" or the "Syriac"? Again, is it really the case that (as Toynbee claims) a larger unit is more intelligible than a smaller unit or a panoramic view "a less misleading reflection of reality than a partial view"? There is, on the face of it, no reason why this should be so, or for speaking as though history is a mirror-image of "reality." In *Auguries of Innocence* Blake gives a rather deeper and truer account of the relative significance of the large and the small, and of the infinite shining through the finite:

*To see a World in a grain of sand,
And a Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour.*

THE CIVILISATIONS which Toynbee has listed and classified are in any case studied not for their own sake, but only so that a comparison between them may disclose the laws of human nature. This results in the events which Toynbee studies being transformed into categories or ideal types, with often paradoxical consequences. Thus, the history of the Roman Empire inspired Toynbee to fashion the concept of "internal" and "external" proletariat, and to use it for explaining the decline and downfall of other civilisations. But the notion of proletariat, which in fact has its origin in Roman history, abandons its

historical moorings in the end, and becomes a free-floating category to be applied as and when the needs of classification require its presence. Thus we find Toynbee declaring—in the conversation with Urban—that Tolstoy, though a wealthy aristocrat who was privileged to do what he liked, was in reality a proletarian because he was "alienated" from the Czarist régime. Similarly, the South African whites who are opposed to *apartheid*: "Aren't they part of the proletariat—alongside of the blacks of South Africa? Many of this white minority are eminent intellectuals, some of them are wealthy, but from this spiritual and psychological point of view they are part of the proletariat."

The demands of Toynbee's classificatory system result in many other paradoxical statements which, if taken *au pied de la lettre*, must bewilder the historian—let alone the common reader. Thus Toynbee argues that universal states engender universal religions. This argument is clearly inspired from Roman history where Christianity spread as a religion of its spiritually famished "internal proletariat." But Toynbee must needs generalise from this "specimen", and we are therefore invited to believe that the Caliphate (which was itself the outcome of Islam) did for Islam what the Roman Empire did for Christianity. Again, universal states are broken up by barbarian invasion—and therefore the Ottoman Empire, but for "the mightier march of Westernization", would have been broken up by "incipient barbarian invasions." Who were these incipient barbarian invaders?

The Ottomans provide yet another puzzle for the reader. Toynbee explains that the growth of civilisation is the outcome of a successful response to a challenge. But if response is not adequate to the challenge, a society may become "arrested." The Ottomans, like the Spartans, are an example of arrested growth. They "leaped" from being a pastoral Nomadic community to being an imperial Power:

"They faced the unprecedented challenge of having to govern vast populations, and, trying to cope with this novel political problem, they created intractable and inflexible institutions which precluded any further social development."

Now it is well known that among empire-builders the Ottomans were not unique in having pastoralist origins; nor is it the case that their transformation into the rulers of an empire was a sudden "leap." Such a description would fit the Arabs much better. It is also well known that the Ottoman state lasted for some six centuries, which is quite a long time, that from first to last its institutions underwent a prodigious amount of change, and that on the whole they managed quite well the problem of governing "vast subject

populations." What sense, then, are we to give to the epithet "arrested" when it is applied to the Ottoman Empire, and how are we to establish that it was more or less "arrested" than the Roman, or the Abbasid, or the Austrian, or the British Empire? "Inflexible", "intractable", and "arrested", when used to describe societies and political institutions are mere metaphors; as a *jeu d'esprit* they may be stimulating, but by themselves impart little of substance. May we not even go further and ask (with the author of the latest appreciation of Toynbee's *oeuvre*):

"Who can gainsay Lord Palmerston's dictum that 'Half the wrong conclusions at which mankind arrive are reached by the abuse of metaphors' . . . ?"³

THE NEEDS OF HIS SYSTEM lead Toynbee to a judgment which, of all the paradoxes in *A Study of History*, will perhaps most bewilder and disorient his readers. For Toynbee asserts, flatly and sweepingly, that the Western genius in architecture, sculpture, and painting in the half-millennium since Giotto has been "afflicted" with "sterility." It has been sterilised by a "Hellenising renaissance", the evil effects of which were not thrown off until the 19th century, when Hamlin Hall built on the shores of the Bosphorus in 1869-71, and the Halle des Machines in Paris in 1889 first showed us what the Western genius could do when it was not smothered by the ghost of a resuscitated Hellenism. This extravagant and exorbitant verdict is a mechanical application of Toynbee's theory about growth, arrest, and decline. Growth expresses the strength of native genius; therefore to be inspired by the achievements of a dead civilisation is a dangerous raising of ghosts, a sinister trafficking with the dead. Therefore Cyrus Hamlin is better than Brunelleschi.

Toynbee's wholesale dismissal of five centuries of Western art, eccentric and paradoxical as it is, raises fundamental issues about the character of human life itself. Man is a being who is aware of himself, and aware that his world is a mind-affected world. It is because his world is such that he is at all at home in it. To say this is to say how vitally man depends on legacies and traditions, on the transmission of modes of thought and behaviour, on artefacts and institutions, without which he would be unable to survive, or at best become simply an animal or a savage. It is for this reason, among others, that man's nature is his history. Toynbee's depreciation of legacies and traditions, his dismissal of them as a dead hand and an incubus, does not tally with

³ Arnold J. Toynbee: *Historian for an Age in Crisis*. By ROLAND N. STROMBERG. Southern Illinois University Press, \$5.95, £3.30.

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our experience and historical knowledge. And if this depreciation is systematically adopted as a maxim or a rule of action, then it must result in making men aliens in their own human world, in increasing their insecurity and "alienation."

Such feelings of instability are, in any case, usually disagreeable. To show this we need go no further than *A Study of History* itself. Readers of the original ten volumes know how stable and immutable the position of the Jews and Judaism was in Toynbee's scheme. The Jews were fossils who had survived from the dead Syriac civilisation. Their religion was characterised by fanaticism and intolerance and arrogance, and from it the West had derived these detestable traits. These views have almost disappeared from the one-volume abridgment which even goes so far as to state that in all three religions of the Judaic school, "God the sovereign legislator has been seen to be God the merciful and compassionate synonym for love." Toynbee goes even further. This fossil of a dead civilisation, now a scattered diaspora, is declared to be "the wave of the future", and this because the "transformation of the world into a cosmopolis favours social organization on a non-local basis." Verily, to adopt the Psalmist's words, the fossil which the builders have rejected is now the head-stone of the corner! But this is none the less puzzling. For the Jews are now still what they ever were, and no new historical discovery has occurred to warrant so radical a reappraisal. It is disturbing to come upon so great and so unexplained a change in the seemingly solid and "objective" fabric of Toynbee's scheme.

As Professor Nathan Rotenstreich pointed out some years ago, the attention which Toynbee devotes to Jews and Judaism is out of all proportion to the place which he allots to them in world history.⁴ This remark is as true of the abridgment as of the original work. Toynbee is much pre-occupied with the past, present, and future of the Jews. He discusses the two options which have been open to them (which he calls Herodianism and Zealotism), and attempts to fit Zionism and anti-Zionism within these categories. He points out that in terms of these two options, the Zionist position is ambivalent, and he concludes: "At all events, the attempted Israeli-Jewish responses to the problem of 'peculiarity' will all of them fail unless the policy of national and religious exclusivity is renounced forthwith." Zionism, as is well known, is a nationalist movement, no different in its ideological assumptions from other nationalist movements in the Middle East and elsewhere. Why it should be singled out

for such a peremptory monition is obscure. Furthermore, the reader may wonder whether the historian is in a position, *qua* historian, to offer advice so confidently, and so imperiously. Supposing the Israelis proceeded "forthwith" to follow Toynbee's advice, and in consequence came a cropper? Or supposing they disregarded it, and thereafter flourished exceedingly? What, in either case, would be the historian's apology?

BUT IT DOES NOT SEEM that such dangers worry Toynbee very much. On the contrary, the history which he writes has an avowed practical purpose. *A Study of History* is there to inculcate a lesson and to point a moral. The lesson is that of the "senseless criminality" of human affairs hitherto; and the moral is that mankind must grow "into something like a single family", or else destroy itself. It is to drive this point properly home that Toynbee has embarked on a universal history. "A study of human affairs", he tells us, "must be comprehensive if it is to be effective." Toynbee clarifies this argument by means of a quotation from Polybius whose influence on him was (he told Urban) "enormous":

"The coincidence by which all the transactions of the world have been oriented in a single direction and guided towards a single goal is the extraordinary characteristic of the present age, to which the special feature of the present work is a corollary. The unity of events imposes on the historian a similar unit of composition in depicting for his readers the operation of the laws of Fortune on the grand scale, and this has been my own principal inducement and stimulus in the work which I have undertaken. . . ."

We are puzzled how we are to understand this passage in the context of Toynbee's own work. Is it that he, too, believes all the transactions of the world to be oriented in a single direction? And does he, too, want to depict "the operations of the laws of Fortune"?

In this passage Polybius, we know, is looking forward to and celebrating the beneficent spread of Roman dominion. But Toynbee is far indeed from eulogising any earthly state or dominion. On this issue he is perfectly categorical. "The so-called 'civilised' state is", he affirms, "simply an imposing, high-powered version of the primitive tribe." This, of course, is simply not true. A tribe is held together by blood and kinship, a civilised state by law. In a tribe there can be no distinction between private and public, while on such a distinction all civilised states must rest. A tribe is primitive because it lacks the institutions which mediate between the multifarious interests of its members, while a civilised state is civilised precisely because it can discharge these mediatory and remedial duties. But it is easy to see that the

⁴ Nathan Rotenstreich, *The Recurring Pattern: Studies in Anti-Judaism in Modern Thought* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1963), p.76.

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achievement which a civilised state represents is, paradoxically, of little consequence to Toynbee. "Paradoxically", because an historical study is concerned with human actions, and the evidence will simply not allow us blithely to dismiss as insignificant the establishment and maintenance of a polity, or to condemn all political actions as hopelessly tainted with criminality.

BUT FOR TOYNBEE all the political arts are pernicious and in the end vain and useless. The stimulus of danger or a cold-blooded calculation of expediency are inefficacious for salvation. The power to save ourselves can only come from love:

"In virtue of this love which is equally human and divine, the Kingdom of God has a peace of its own which is not the philosophic peace of detachment, but the peace of life lived by men in and for God. . . . That is the palingenesia which Jesus proclaimed as the sovereign aim of his own birth in the flesh."

Again, we are told:

"If this is a soul's recognised aim for itself and for its fellow souls in the Christian Church on Earth, then it is evident that under a Christian dispensation God's will *will* be done on Earth as it is in Heaven to an immeasurably greater degree than in a secular mundane society."

In respect of these passages too we are perplexed. And for this reason: that in his conversation with Urban Toynbee has declared that he is not a believer, that he does not know whether there is a God, and that when he was an undergraduate he ceased to believe in the doctrines of Christianity. How then are we to understand these references in *A Study of History* to God's will and to divine love and to "the palingenesia which Jesus proclaimed"?

But however we may understand them, is it anyway the case that in our fallen condition it is love (and only love) which saves? What is love? Love is a feeling which moves the lover to promote above everything else the good of the loved one. Is this feeling, even though it were universal, enough to maintain the state of the world? The world with all its denizens, we know, is various, changeable, and even treacherous. What the lover may look upon as good the loved one may consider simply hateful. And does it follow that if you want the good, you will have enough prudence to bring it about? And even if your action is faultless, may the course of events not in the end mock your benevolence, and out of good in fact produce evil? Love is not enough.

Toynbee also utters exalted words about conscience. He sees a conflict between it and the "ecclesiastical 'Establishment'", and his language shows clearly enough that he believes the promptings of conscience always to be better

than the wisdom of the "Establishment." But the individual conscience, acting strictly on its own, spurning the help of institutions and traditions, is as likely to counsel evil as to prescribe the good. Eichmann, we remember, pleaded that he did what he did "for the sake of conscience", and he may not have been lying.

Where will love and the dictates of conscience take us? Paradoxically, they will take us to a Super-establishment, an all-engulfing institution. For Toynbee looks forward to the unification of mankind in a world-state. What would a world-state conceivably look like? Will it not have to be some kind of gigantic EEC in which Love will have to be codified in "community regulations", and whose managers will be infinitely more remote than any State or Church which has hitherto existed? But it may be that Toynbee does not think so, for the model which he seems to commend to us is that of Communist China. The caption below a picture of an athletic display in China (drafted by Miss Caplan but approved by him) declares:

"Westerners tend to see in China a repulsive modern Leviathan, but behind the ceremonial lies an ideal of mutual solidarity and co-operation from which a fragmented world may learn."

The caption appended to the reproduction of a Chinese propaganda poster (it shows Chairman Mao visiting a factory) invites us to consider the possibility that here is "a deliberately controlled attempt at a felicitous synthesis" which might be "a wholly new cultural departure for civilised Man." Toynbee is clearly much attracted by Mao's China (as his conversation with Urban shows):

TOYNBEE: This is a possibility—a rule of technocrats, with the state acting as Confucian paterfamilias, demanding and receiving, as you say, filial obedience from the workers. The extremism of the Cultural Revolution shows that Mao must have perceived this as a very real danger. This extraordinary purge, not only of the ruler's enemies, but of his bureaucracy—the transmission belts of his system—is, I think, unique in history, and is totally unlike the Stalinist terror. Mao made fools, in public, of the Mandarins, but then, instead of having their heads cut off, he put them back in office, and the people, having had the Mandarins gayed and seen through, will perhaps now not kowtow so abjectly as, according to tradition, they would be inclined to do. I think this was in Mao's mind.

URBAN: If one could set aside the appalling cruelties that preceded (and partly also accompanied) the Cultural Revolution, one might applaud, anyway, Mao's intention. I would personally rejoice at the thought of Italian bailiffs, French social security administrators, and even some British customs officers being given a taste of the Maoist whip.

TOYNBEE: I think it would be a salutary exercise for all bureaucrats—they ought to be put through it at fairly short intervals.

It may be that we too, if we desire the "felicitous synthesis" of Maoist China, should arrange for our First Division civil servants (should we call them practitioners of "institutionalised violence"?) to make quarterly public confessions before the multitude in Trafalgar Square.

TOYNBEE, as we have just seen, contrasts favourably Mao to Stalin. But his judgment of Soviet Communism is by no means unfavourable. Its founder, Lenin, he puts in the same category as Christ, the Buddha and Gandhi. Lenin is "a creative personality [who] feels the impulse of internal necessity to transfigure his fellow men by converting them to his own insight", and whose emergence "inevitably precipitates a social conflict, as society struggles to cope with the disequilibrium produced by his creative energy." Lenin's transfigurative activities were inspired, as is well known, by Marxist doctrine. This doctrine (Toynbee tells us) is "the classic exposition of the social crisis that accompanies the disintegration of a civilisation." The Marxist schema, he believes, is true, "as a matter of ascertainable historical fact."

"The phenomenon of disintegration, as it is revealed in history, does exhibit a movement that runs through war to peace; through an apparently wanton and savage destruction of past achievements to fresh works of creation that seem to owe their special quality to the devouring glow of the very flames in which they have been forged."

What is so lyrically described here Toynbee calls a movement of "schism-and-palingenesia." Palingenesia is the word he had used to describe what Jesus proclaimed. Are we to understand that what Lenin effected was a palingenesia?

As a matter of ascertainable historical fact the Bolshevik Revolution was accompanied by a great deal of violence. But this violence was evoked by, was a response to, a disintegrating Western industrial society which, in Toynbee's pages, is depicted throughout as greedy and aggressive in various ways. The West has presumed to take possession of the whole world as though it was "in the gift of some war goddess of private enterprise." Commerce and industry, which have served prodigiously to increase material welfare, Toynbee denounces as Western cultural aggression, as though humanity had before then been utterly innocent of buying and selling. We are shown a contemporary Nigerian shop sign showing a man in Western clothes and proclaiming: "SEE THE MANAGER IN CHARGE." This, we are told, "is a signal of the West's successful cultural aggression, which has transformed the patriarchal chief of a tribal society into the ubiquitous managerial boss of Western commerce." A few pages further on, we come

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upon a sketch—a caricature really—reproduced from a left-wing French periodical of the beginning of the century and purporting to show a European in a solar topee sitting in an easy chair, with revolver in hand and drink at his side, receiving the obeisance of grovelling and cowering natives. As though this picture depicted ascertainable historical fact, the caption declares: “unprofitable or dangerous natives must be exterminated like vermin: a nineteenth-century French colonialist does his bit for civilisation.” The West is guilty of “atrocities” in Korea, the Americans in Viet Nam, the French in Algeria, and the French police in Paris in 1968. These “atrocities” are the sign of breakdown, and “moral responsibility for the breakdowns of civilisations lies upon the heads of the leaders.” This passage occurs on page 166 of the one-volume abridgment.

As I have said, Toynbee is not a popular writer,

and makes no concessions to his audience. We may assume that the readers who had the diligence to persevere so far would be educated enough and knowledgeable enough to know that those against whom the Western forces were fighting in Korea, the Americans in Viet Nam and the French in Algeria were ruthless and unscrupulous enemies fully capable, as a matter of ascertainable historical fact, of committing the most chilling atrocities. Would this reader then wonder why the North Koreans, the Viet Cong, and the FLN are not denounced with the same stern and prophetic accents? If it is right to assume that some such thought would revolve in such a reader's mind, then not the least paradoxical in this budget of paradoxes is Toynbee's continuing popularity in the Western world to which Mr Urban has attested, and to which the illustrated edition of *A Study of History* constitutes such weighty testimony.

The English Revolution

Sunbeams and Lumps of Clay—By WILLIAM M. LAMONT

“How the purer spirit is united to this clod is a knot too hard for fallen humanity to untie. How should a thought be united to a marble-statue or a sunbeam to a lump of clay!”

JOSEPH GLANVILL

EXCELLENT BOOKS on the English Revolution pour from the presses, and yet the task of synthesis becomes ever more difficult. Why should this be so? My argument in this article is against a tendency in historical writings to divorce political ideas from political actions. For instance, Christopher Hill offers this advice in the introduction to his study of sectarian thought, *The World Turned Upside Down*:¹

“The reader who wishes to restore his perspective might with advantage read the valuable book recently published by Professor David Underdown, *Pride's Purge* (Oxford U.P., 1971). This book deals with the same period as I do, but from an entirely different angle. His is the view from the top, from Whitehall, mine the worm's eye view. His index and mine contain totally different lists of names.”

Such division of powers can have unforeseen consequences. Political ideas can be seen as something separable from the real world of practical politics. Indeed political theory can be seen as something which only happens to scholars

and non-gentlemen. On the one hand the cerebral relay race, where Aquinas is forever handing the baton on from Plato to Locke; on the other hand, riots in the stands, with tinkers declaiming from the Book of Revelation and soldiers debating the Rights of Man. Meanwhile, back in the box-office, Cromwell and Ireton are coolly pocketing the receipts. The theme has variations: a non-gentleman may even *become* a scholar. Thus in that same book Dr Hill can learnedly show affinities between the Digger leader, Gerrard Winstanley, and Hobbes, and—hey presto!—a year later Winstanley is promoted to a “Pelican Classic.” He has become an intellectual athlete instead of a nuisance on the terraces: he has been raised to a new level of ineffectuality. The real world—where Thomas Cromwell makes Privy Councils and Oliver Cromwell unmakes Parliaments—lies somewhere else.

Another book by Dr Hill—*Antichrist in England*²—illustrates the dangers in such a division. The publisher's blurb calls the book “a significant contribution to historical studies, and also a fascinating account, with many colourful quotations, of a movement of what might be called ‘left wing’ thought.” Well, it might be called that, but it would be extraordinarily ineptly called that. The purpose of Dr Hill's study is to educate us out of the mistaken belief that Antichrist in the 17th century was an evocative figure

¹ Temple Smith (1972).

² Oxford University Press (1971).

only to the lunatic fringe. On the contrary, he shows the centrality of this obsession and documents its appeal to lawyers, bishops and princes. No man is his blurb-writer's keeper, but I would argue that this astonishing gap in communication could only come from a background in which it was assumed that the study of ideas belonged to the wings of history.

To argue for their reimposition to the centre of the stage of any reconstruction of the English Revolution is not to revive the ghost of Walzer. In 1966 Michael Walzer published his *The Revolution of the Saints*:³ an audacious attempt to see Puritanism as a modernising ideology. He traced the foundations of the English Revolution to a radical aspiration and organisation which went back to Calvin himself and to the work of the Marian exiles. He freely admitted that—within a rough chronological framework—he had jumped over the years to support his thesis, drawing here upon the Tudors, there upon the Stuarts and again there upon the revolutionary period itself. There were merits to the book, besides the clear, vigorous prose in which it was written. Walzer focused on a real issue: the problem of the regicide. How did men summon up the nerve to execute their King? Walzer worked back from this question, and found the answer in the appearance of revolutionary organisation and radical ideology in the 16th century.

HISTORIANS HAVE NOT found his answer convincing. Basically, his method is ahistorical. The lumping together of the experiences of Puritans (always supposing that we know who they are), at very different periods of development and in response to very different challenges, is unsound, and unwarranted. One thinks of the eagerness of a Puritan in the 1630s, like William Prynne, to embrace the cause of Archbishop Whitgift against his Elizabethan Puritan opponent, Cartwright, whom Prynne dismisses as an "opposite." Walzer has made it easy for himself in the way that a reader of Agatha Christie can: read the last chapter first and the butler's earlier plausibility now has a hollow ring. With sufficient ingenuity one can tease out enough reservations in the public statements of English Puritans before 1640 to construct a genealogy of resistance theorising. Without that borrowed-from-hindsight omniscience, the situation looks very different. C. H. George has demonstrated how loyal and deferential English Puritans were on the eve of the English Revolution: more recent research in other areas has remarkably strengthened his case. Walzer's book is in reality a glossy expression of the "line of development" approach—the pursuit of a single theme through different periods of time—

³ Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

History TODAY

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which was dreamed up by M. V. C. Jeffreys in the 1930s to improve the teaching of history in schools. We are still reaping that particular harvest.

PERHAPS WALZER's greatest error can now be seen as investing too much significance in the execution of Charles I. We have already seen that it led to a distortion *backward*: to an exaggerated respect for the radicalism of pre-Revolutionary Puritanism. But it also led to a distortion *forward*: to an equally exaggerated disdain for a Rump Parliament and Protectorate which had so signally failed to sustain the momentum of a "Revolution of the Saints." This is where two excellent new books redress that particular imbalance: Blair Worden's *The Rump Parliament*⁴ and Gerald Aylmer's *The State's Servants*.⁵ The Rump has often been described unfeelingly as lazy and oligarchical, while the men who administered the Commonwealth and Protectorate have in their turn been called time-servers or faceless bureaucrats or both. Both are now shown in good, but not uncritical, light in these two detailed monographs. Worden sees the Rump as over-burdened rather than indolent, the not wholly innocent casualties of the events of the 1640s. The abolition of Star Chamber and Privy Council increased the administrative burden on the Rump, while a taste for petitioning had been planted in the demonstrations of the earlier period. The Rump was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of business. Nor is it necessary to posit a wilful obstructive policy by "moderates" to explain the failure of the "revolutionaries" in the Rump. The "revolutionaries" never were very revolutionary. David Underdown has already shown that Cromwell's own commitment to regicide was very late indeed; that even up until 23 December 1648 he was working for compromise, with the Earl of Denbigh as the go-between. Once committed, there was to be no shirking on his part, but if a revolutionary is defined by his commitment to regicide then Cromwell was, at best, a four-week revolutionary. Worden challenges even that assumption. He shows how, for the majority of the regicides, the judgment was on Charles I, not on Kingship: the decision to abolish the office came a week after, not before, the death of the man. Some men like Hutchinson and Purefoy saw the act of regicide as less revolutionary than the Purge; others like Heveningham supported both the Purge and the regicide in order to keep power in civilian, not military, hands; while even a

committed regicide like Ludlow had nothing to offer for the future—except sneers at lawyers and clergy. Worden's careful study acquits the Rump alike of early radicalism and later dilatoriness. The difference between 1649 and 1653 is not in the quality of the Members, but in the quality of Cromwell's response to them. Cromwell, not the Rump, had decisively changed. Worden's most striking revision is of the customary view that the Rump fell because they were seeking to perpetuate their existence indefinitely. This charge appears again in Aylmer's book, but I found Worden's refutation of it convincing.

Elsewhere Aylmer joins Worden in a skilful apology for non-revolutionary non-saints. The English Republic did not founder on the incapacity or dishonesty of its officials. Thurloe feathered his nest, much as "reformer" Cranfield had done in an earlier period, but he was not a profiteer in the Strafford class. Aylmer complains at the common confusion of 17th-century Puritanism with 19th-century nonconformity (in another context Hill called them as different as vinegar from wine): his research in Poor Law administration confirms other work that throws doubt upon Tawney-like stereotypes of the Puritan response to poverty. Nor was there anything peculiarly repressive about the "Rule of the Saints": no pronounced war upon alehouses or witches (as Keith Thomas had already established), no crusading defence of the Sabbath. Aylmer is impressed by the theme of continuity in studying the published records of court and assizes, while the Major-Generals are seen as "an English upper-class bogey", unpopular for what they were, not for what they did. In an odd way Pepys becomes the beneficiary of Barebones: the Restoration civil servants combined the taking of fees and gratuities on the pre-Civil War scale with the higher salaries of the Interregnum. Unhaunted by visions of what-might-have-been, Aylmer praises a period in English life when the rich were less under-taxed, careers more open to talent, the navy more efficient and committees less corrupt than was true before, or indeed after.

THE WORKS OF WORDEN and Aylmer show what we gain in perspective when we measure the English Revolution by what it achieved rather than by the aspirations which it failed to satisfy. The study of politicians in practice has highlighted the weaknesses of an over-ambitious study of political ideas. This must not be misread as a vindication for studying the political practice minus the political ideas. For I now want to make two further points: that Walzer's political theory has been challenged not only by political practice but also by *better* political theory; that the neglect

⁴ *The Rump Parliament*. By BLAIR WORDEN. Cambridge University Press, £4.40

⁵ *The State's Servants*. By G. E. AYLMEYER. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £8

of political ideas in Worden and Aylmer qualifies even their splendid contribution to our understanding of the English Revolution.

Walzer distorted *forward*: non-revolutionary non-saints got short shrift from him. But he also distorted *backward*: he made revolutionary saints out of provincial, backward-looking, Monarchy-loving nonconformists. We know much more now about the appeal of magic-giving attributes of Kingship in the 17th century through the writings of Keith Thomas and Frances Yates. Our much greater understanding of the grip that the Book of Revelation held upon the minds of men in this period does not cancel this out. On the contrary: it reinforces it. When a Puritan of the stature of Richard Baxter could write in secret in his prison cell in 1686 that "no part of Scripture more fully sheweth the Royal Supremacy than the Apocalypse and former prophecies", he was only echoing a belief held by many English Protestants.

Walzer consistently underplays this reverence for authority in English Protestant thought. He also shares with historians of the Left and of the Right the illusion that the "Right" is synonymous with stability (they differ only about whether stability is a good thing). But in the recent collection of essays edited by Conrad Russell, *The Origins of the English Civil War*,⁶ Dr Tyacke advances the thesis that Puritans were fighting a defensive war in the 1630s against the ruthless imposition of Arminian ideology from above.

THE THESIS is not in itself novel. Puritans were saying that themselves in the 1630s. On the whole their protestations have not been taken too seriously by historians. A famous pun stood in the way of understanding: its ready acceptance by historians itself speaks volumes for their lack of respect for ideas. Bishop Morley is said to have remarked: "What do the Arminians hold? Why, they hold all the best bishoprics and deaneries." It is a good joke, but not the last word on Laud's Arminianism. Until Tyacke's massive doctoral study it seemed in danger of becoming so. The Archbishop's social policies had been explained by Professor Trevor-Roper, and Dr Seaver showed how he failed to crush Puritan lectureships. But recent research by Professor Bangs, working within a European rather than English context, supports Tyacke's contention that the Arminian ideology—the direct challenge to Calvinist faith in the Predestination of the Elect—should be put in the foreground of the Puritan case against Laud. I only think it a pity that Tyacke does not relate the imposition of this doctrine more closely to the parallel claim, advanced by Laudian bishops for their office, that

⁶ *The Origins of the English Civil War*. Edited by CONRAD RUSSELL. Macmillan, £3.50, paper £1.60.

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they existed by divine right, not by virtue of the Royal Supremacy. The two claims are strictly not parallel: High Church Calvinists flourished in the reign of James I—men like Carleton and Downe. They were not extinct in Laud's time—witness Joseph Hall—but they were becoming rarer. The panic felt by English Protestants came from their perception of a twin menace; an assault on their Calvinist faith and on the Royal Supremacy from the same source: Arminian bishops. Prynne's pamphlet of 1637 was entitled *A Breviate of the Prelates Intollerable Usurpations Upon the King's Prerogative*. With our knowledge of Civil War developments this seems perverse. It did not seem so at the time. I have shown elsewhere an original intent in the Puritan prosecutors—only reluctantly and belatedly discarded—to charge Laud with seeking to *destroy* the Royal Prerogative. Laud may not have been a prolific controversialist, but we know from his correspondence with Bishop Hall how much he contributed to Hall's defence of divine right sanction for bishops in 1639—the writings which triggered off Milton, Smectymnus and the “root and branch” agitation. Saints willing revolution, or Calvinists defending themselves (and King) from a real or imagined counter-revolution? I prefer Tyacke's model to Walzer's.

ONE REACTION to Walzer is to stress that ideology *is* important but that it comes in as a consequence, rather than cause, of the English Revolution. This is the argument of Brian Manning in the volume of essays edited by him, *Politics, Religion and the English Civil War*¹: that a constitutional conflict changed, somewhere around 1643, into a religious one. This is one possible interpretation (favoured by Cromwell himself), but is here given disproportionate weight by the choice and arrangement of themes. A study of Chester Puritanism on the eve of the Civil War is taken up with squabbles about surplices, Sabbath, and the sign of the cross in baptism. This is one truth about Puritanism but not the whole truth: neither “Arminianism” nor “Apocalypse” appear in the Index, although Manning, in his introduction, recognises “the study of ideas” as “proving one of the most successful methods of understanding attitudes and issues in this period.” Another essay is concerned with showing the groundlessness for contemporary fears of Popery, not in exploring the consequences of holding such a fallacious belief. Dr Manning's own essay on the politics of 1641 rests heavily on the accounts of

Clarendon and Baxter, both written well after the event. Both, moreover, had different reasons for underplaying religion as the most important divisive factor in 1641. Two other essays, it is true, seek to relate Leveller thinking to Christianity and discuss the role of women petitioners, but both are drawn from the later period. On the evidence of this volume alone, the reader could be forgiven for thinking that the clash of religious ideas *was* a post-1643 phenomenon: that before the scholars and non-gentlemen (Levellers and women) broadened the issues, the English Revolution was about nit-picking political differences.

If Aylmer and Worden also underplay ideas in their analyses of the Revolution their betrayal is at a more subtle level. There is a wrong case to make against Aylmer: he anticipates and ably refutes it. The historian who seeks, as Aylmer does, to understand the mechanics of administration can be accused of neglecting ideas and principles. He becomes a “Namierite”: one who takes the mind out of history. As a description of the methods and achievements of the late Sir Lewis Namier this is a vulgar parody. Nor will it do as a statement of Aylmer's own contribution. Aylmer has written a significant book. Its strength is precisely his willingness to go behind the ideas expressed in pamphlets of the period to the reality which underlay them. Let one small example illustrate the scholarship and balance of his research. In discussing corruption, Aylmer deals in passing with the accusation of Leveller John Lilburne that the Commissioners for Compounding had allowed themselves to be intimidated by Heselrige in a disputed case of litigation. The Commons treated it as a gross breach of privilege, and fined and banished Lilburne. Neither Lilburne's biographers nor the editor of the Compounding Commissioners' papers consulted the original record. Behind the fair-copy order book which they used was an original rough minute-book, which Aylmer found to contain nine entries on this case. Remarkably some of these contain some heavy crossings-out. Aylmer used an ultra-violet lamp to penetrate their secret but to no avail. Even so, his balance is such that he refuses to read necessarily sinister inferences from these deletions. The Lilburne case is not central to his thesis and yet is explored as if it were: an incomparable piece of scholarship.

NOR IS AYLMER a dryasdust. He has an eye for telling detail, the incident that amuses as well as informs. From him we learn of the man sentenced to six months in Newgate for writing to his sweetheart that he would rather be in bed with her than in heaven with Jesus Christ. There are

¹ *Politics, Religion and the English Civil War*. Edited by BRIAN MANNING. Edward Arnold, £4.

allusions to Hofstadter and Djilas as well as to the Public Record Office State Papers. Aylmer acknowledges that this was "an age of ideological conflict and of upheaval in society arising partly from this clash of ideas." But he goes on to say that he has therefore "wherever possible included men's beliefs and ideological connections" when describing the backgrounds and careers of the Republic's officials. The wording is significant: ideas are included, but as an appendage of men's careers, not woven into an interpretation of them. It is at this high level of criticism that even Aylmer's work reveals the division that I have discussed.

A few examples will help. There has been a great deal of work on the political theory of *de facto* rule: Aylmer mentions the work of Skinner and Wallace but does not try to synthesise their findings with the career problems of officials with scruples. He says that there is "no point in swelling the chapter out with little biographies of Cromwell and Milton"; even if true, there are people of lesser stature—Robinson, Vane and Harrison, for instance—of whose ideas enough is known for him to chance his arm with some hypotheses. His treatment of Henry Parker is particularly disappointing. Parker was the most creative mind, on the Parliamentary side, thrown up by the Civil War pamphlet battles. His career plummets downward in 1644 after a promising start. Why? Aylmer leaves him as "a puzzling figure", but there is enough material in Parker's writings to offer suggestions why he should respond in different ways to the different political and religious challenges in this period. Aylmer's way is not to chance his arm. The price that we pay is that we see the officials only from the outside. The paranoid John Bernard—convinced of a Jesuit/Leveller plot involving Speaker Lenthall—surfaces as a litigant; the collective paranoia of the time—in which many officials less hysterical than Bernard would serve a régime that protected them from conspiracies no less exotic—does not emerge so clearly. The Royal Touch was traditionally supposed to cure the scrofulous. Henry Marten, the sardonic Republican, suggested that in the Interregnum the Great Seal of Parliament should be used as a healing substitute. The quip illuminates the dilemma of the State's Servants, as opposed to the King's Servants: it is significant that I encountered it, not in Aylmer, but in Keith Thomas's investigation into religion and the decline of magic.

WORDEN'S STUDY of the Rump Parliament is scholarly, searching and balanced. Yet his work also fails on occasions to bridge the gap between practice and theory. John Goodwin's

decline, for instance, is seen as part of the Rump suspicion of those who had championed the Purge and the regicide. Maybe, but Goodwin had also won notoriety by his retreat from orthodox Calvinism: his fall from grace may have been due to his disbelief in the Fall from Grace. Similarly Worden sees the quarrel between Presbyterians and Independents in the 1640s as a trifling over technicalities. In one sense this was certainly true. To read the correspondence between Baxter and Owen is to be made aware of how trifling the areas of disagreement were *about forms of government*: yet their disagreement over who should be admitted to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper revealed a profound difference of philosophy. In the terminology of Ernst Troeltsch, it is the difference between "sect ideal" and "church ideal." When Worden is discussing religious toleration he refers to the Quaker James Nayler as "a sorry lunatic accused of imitating Christ." By failing to penetrate to a deeper understanding of Nayler than was shown by his contemporary critics in the Commons, Worden drastically reduces the value of his subsequent analysis of political attitudes thrown up by the Nayler case. Dr Geoffrey Nuttall has written a long, careful study of Nayler, in which he has set Nayler's seeming eccentricity against the background of his time. Moreover a physically weakened but intellectually chastened Nayler made the heroic effort himself, after suffering for his blasphemy, to put his seeming excesses in context. It is the context which itself explains the ferocity of the reaction no less than the abuse that triggered it off: just as Pride's Purgers were very much aware of the imminent possibility of a World Turned Upside Down. Names in Hill's and Underdown's studies may not overlap, but their fears and hopes did: this is the crassness of separating political ideas from political practice.

Nor would Worden himself have lapsed in that way in discussing the career of one of his Independent or Presbyterian Rumpers. Before pigeonholing Nayler as "a sorry lunatic" he would have examined the number of times that Nayler appeared as a teller for The Sorry Lunatics, the importance of the divisions, and the pressures to which he was exposed; and probably concluded that he was a half-sorry half-lunatic at best. The historian's double standard, in his comparative treatment of political practice and political ideas, could hardly be more mercilessly exposed.

It is fascinating that Worden's splendidly detailed study of Rump M.P.s' political behaviour should end with a mystery. On 20 April 1653, Cromwell abandoned four years of fairly consistent conciliation. Why? Too sensitive to dis-

miss the Protector as being "in the grip of a millenarian trance", Worden yet sees it as "the resolution of a prolonged private spiritual drama." What Worden is recognising in these words is the impossibility of our having a definitive biography of Cromwell until the patient research of Underdown, Aylmer and Worden

himself into the politics of the period has been synthesised with the insights into Cromwell's mind offered by R. S. Paul and Christopher Hill. No more shall we see the English Revolution whole until sunbeams have been united to lumps of clay: and not even the most powerful ultra-violet lamp will achieve *that*.

Monuments to Whom?

The State of Industrial Archaeology—By KENNETH HUDSON

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL, *Industrial Archaeology*, is ten years old. Volume 1, Number 1 contained articles on early fulling stocks in Gloucestershire, a Wiltshire paper mill, charcoal-burning in the New Forest, the Bristol Coalfield, the Port of Southampton, company museums, industrial archaeology in Belgium and the plans for an open-air museum in the North-East. Volume 10, Number 4 dealt with the history of William Wilson Dickie and Sons, the East Kilbride firm of implement makers and agricultural engineers, Alfred Holt and the Lancashire plate-way scheme, the development of the insulators used for overhead transmission lines, the Museum of Technology for the East Midlands, industrial buildings in Upper Silesia. The first editor was a West Country journalist and lasted five years. The second, a Scottish academic, is still there. Fifty pages of articles, fifteen of notes and news and a dozen or so of book reviews are regularly and faithfully produced every three months. All the well-known figures in British industrial archaeology have contributed, at one time or another, in exchange for a fee of six off-prints. It is to be found, on the publisher's oath, in university libraries and public libraries from Sydney to Moscow, and from Naples to Dundee, and it has always covered its costs. Volume XI is to have a bigger page, just like the real archaeological journals. Yet Mr Philip Riden, of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, is not satisfied.

Writing in a recent number of *Antiquity*,¹ Mr Riden, who is an industrial archaeologist of the strict Baptist wing, set out his current worries about the subject. "Why," he demanded, "has 'industrial archaeology' [the quotation marks are his] not received the scholarly recognition accorded medieval and post-medieval archaeology? Why has *Industrial Archaeology* not joined

Medieval Archaeology and *Post-Medieval Archaeology* as an important outlet for archaeological research?" It is clear that for Mr Riden, and no doubt for many of his colleagues with whom he has to talk, eat and hold up his head day by day, nothing exists unless it has received scholarly recognition. It must be worrying for him to be associated with something which, "after more than a decade of energetic activity", still has "so little to offer the historian", something which has a popularity it has done nothing to deserve. This last fact, one feels, is what really bothers Mr Riden, and he puts his finger neatly and accurately on the centre of his trouble when he notes that "however weak academically 'industrial archaeology' may be, a large and enthusiastic readership has sprung up during the last ten years for books on the subject." They are, of course, misguided and deceived, conned by unscrupulous publishers and hack authors into believing that they are reading real food.

Antiquity is a serious publication, but this does not necessarily mean that we should take Mr Riden as seriously as he takes himself. Industrial archaeology may or may not be a "subject." It may or may not be a fit bed-fellow for classical archaeology, medieval archaeology and the rest of the academic clan. Its potentialities as a 'discipline' may be limited. But, if one trend is sadly clear over the past ten years, it is the widening gulf between those sensual sinners who see industrial archaeology as something to be enjoyed and those who are determined to make it proper material for Ph.D.s. This is, of course, a perfectly normal process. There are those who chatter in French and write novels and make love in it, and those who spend a lifetime studying French prosody and prepositional use. But, even so, the movement to academise industrial archaeology is more than usually sad, for reasons that are worth exploring.

¹ XLVII, 1973.

ONE IS THAT this Puritanical determination to squeeze the life and the happiness out of industrial archaeology has already crossed the Atlantic. Salt water has proved no barrier to the infection, although it is too early as yet to see how far it is likely to spread.

America's converts to the gospel of Industrial Archaeology have shown strong signs of sympathy with the clinical approach, which allows machines, bridges, steam-engines and factory buildings to be studied and talked about in an atmosphere from which all feelings, politics and values appear to have been rigorously and officially excluded. "We are," declared Ted Sande, President of the American Society for Industrial Archaeology, at its first Conference in 1972, "the only group whose concern for our industrial heritage stresses both interdisciplinary cooperation and the international essence of industrial activity. These qualities are evident in the very composition of your Board of Directors, which contains representatives from the fields of anthropology, archaeology, architectural history, history of technology, and historic preservation. Although each of these separate disciplines has its own professional organisation, we alone bring all of them together in a mutual attempt to understand the nature of the industrial past." There is, it will be observed, no social historian on the Board, no artist, no

poet. Academically, it is all very respectable and scientific, with hard, crisp edges. On both sides of the Atlantic, Industrial Archaeologists of this pure breed are capable of locating, recording and conserving the monuments of technology with all the detached fervour of dedicated collectors of birds' eggs or antique furniture. It is, it seems, the object itself that commands devotion. The human associations that may cling to its edges are unnecessary and disreputable, mere mud that stops the chariot-wheels of science from turning.

The Communist countries are in some difficulty about industrial archaeology. On the one hand, it is politically correct to hold industrial monuments in high regard, because of their links with the toil and struggles of the workers. Marxism clearly demands that old mines, factories, kilns, canals and saltworks should be valued for the human effort that went into building and operating them. Yet, pulling strongly in the opposite direction, is the never-to-be-missed fact that academics have great prestige in Eastern Europe, especially in the Soviet Union and East Germany, and, as good academics, they like to keep their boundaries, their disciplines, defined with unmistakable clarity. It is consequently possible for one of Europe's greatest and most enthusiastic industrial archaeologists, Otfried Wagenbreth—a man of remarkable humanity, as well as an excel-



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lent scientist and mining historian—to write about the technical monuments of his native Germany and of the surrounding countries as if they had nothing to do with people at all.² The Russians have solved this problem in a very Russian way, by ignoring industrial archaeology completely and keeping the nation's eyes firmly on the present and the future.

IN BELGIUM, where industrial archaeology is finding support and interest of almost British proportions, Fate has been exceptionally kind in providing, as the national guide, prophet and spur, the kind of man who has so far been missing elsewhere. Dr Georges van den Abeelen, scholar—his doctorate is in archaeology—executive member of the Board of the Confederation of Belgian Industries, and enthusiast for simply walking round cities with a dog, a notebook and a camera, in order to find out and record what more traditionally-minded investigators have missed, has been responsible more than anybody else for launching the Belgian Survey of Industrial Monuments and for persuading the universities to take an interest in it. In a recent publication³ he has explained the tactics which he believes it is important to follow during the critical early years—and he has, of course, the successes, failures and, no doubt, follies of the British experience to guide him.

"I belong to that stubbornly naïve category of people," he writes, "who believe every human science should keep away, so far as possible, from every kind of philosophical and political involvement. And I am convinced that a young science, a science which is trying to discover its identity, should be particularly determined about this, if it wants its credentials to be accepted." There is a difficulty here, however, and Dr van den Abeelen is well aware of it. In order to

get the essential and urgent work of industrial archaeology done, one cannot rely only on the universities. One needs the labour of the amateurs as well. The aim must therefore be to secure the cooperation of scholars and coolies ("d'erudits et de coolies").

The mandarin attitude cannot succeed under modern conditions. Scholars are not sufficiently plentiful to do all their own prospecting and donkey-work, and coolies have to be persuaded and treated as equals, because they are volunteers. There is no money to pay them. It is therefore not a luxury to present industrial archaeology in a way that appeals to more than a small group of academics.

ONE LOOKS THEN with particularly keen interest at the publications of Britain's newly established museums of industrial archaeology, at Ironbridge in Shropshire and at Beamish in County Durham. Both museums have so far concentrated on booklets, but there are, we are told, books to come. During 1973, Ironbridge launched the first seven in the series.⁴ Designed by Robin Wade and Jane Sampson, they are admirably written and illustrated, and it is no surprise to learn that they have sold very well. Many thousands of people all over Britain must as a result now have some understanding of what industrial archaeology is about. These booklets, one might say, are part of the broad base of a pyramid, the apex of which will consist of the scholarly works to be written by Mr Philip Riden and his fellow academics. Without such a base, the apex would be in a distinctly uncomfortable situation.

It is curious, and probably significant, that none of these booklets mentions people at all. The workers on whom Coalbrookdale depended remain totally submerged and out of sight. The technical history is excellent, but there are no clues to the size and growth of the local population, or to wages, health, apprenticeship, shops, or anything else which formed part of the living community. Before too long there will probably be booklets which deal specifically with such matters, but at present visitors to Ironbridge come away well informed about what the Museum's Director, Neil Cossons, has called "the technological innovations pioneered here between 1700 and 1870", but very ignorant about the way the people who put these innovations into practice lived and worked.

Three of the seven booklets, and part of the fourth, have been written by Barrie Trinder, who is the leading authority on the industrial history of the area and whose book, *The Industrial Revolution in Shropshire*, was published last year.⁵ Reading this book, one has the feeling that Mr Trinder is really much more interested in

² See, for instance, his recent and thoroughly documented article, "Zur Pflege der technischen Kulturdenkmale in der CSSR und in der VR Polen", *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen Weimar*, 20 Jahrgang, 1973, Heft 2.

³ "L'archéologie industrielle: pourquoi?" *Mémoires et Publications de la Société des Sciences, des Arts et des Lettres du Hainaut*, 84e Volume, Mons, 1971-1973.

⁴ *The Iron Bridge*: A short history of the first iron bridge in the world. *Coalbrookdale*: A walk through Coalbrookdale, to explore the historic buildings and sites. *The Hay Inclined Plane*: How tub boats were raised and lowered between the Shropshire Canal and the Coalport Basin. *David and Sampson*: A pair of blast-furnace blowing engines. *Blists Hill Open Air Museum*: A guide to the site and exhibits. *The Tar Tunnel*: A one thousand yard tunnel under Blists Hill. *The Unnatural History of Blists Hill*: A guide to the plants and wildlife of the museum site.

⁵ *The Industrial Revolution in Shropshire*. BY BARRIE TRINDER. Phillimore & Co., £4.50

machines and technical processes than in people and that, for him, the Industrial Revolution was a kind of circus of machines, performing without human aid or interference. The same impression is given by Heinemann's beautiful symposium-with-pictures, *The Archaeology of the Industrial Revolution*.⁶ It has been said of this book that it sets a new standard for industrial archaeology photographs. What it actually does is to set a standard for colour photographs. Eric de Maré's black and white pictures in *The Functional Tradition in Early Industrial Building* (1958) are unsurpassable. This book certainly demonstrates the immense advantage of having one sensitive and professional photographer to take everything required for a particular book. The uniformity of style is very pleasant.

YET HERE, as in Barrie Trinder's book, one has the feeling that the contributors, knowledgeable as they are and well as they write, are for some reason frightened or ashamed to hint that there were people around during the Industrial Revolution. One longs for even a picture of a graveyard to remind us that these steam-engines, railways and mills did not build themselves, stoke themselves and repair themselves. Whose monuments, in fact, are they? It is surely meaningless to talk of "technological change" and "industrial monuments." People, not steam-engines, have monuments. What "technological change" really means is not merely engineers' bright ideas and investors' money, but the use of new equipment, new tools, new materials and new techniques by individual people, as part of the business of earning a living. The workers who learnt, often slowly and with considerable difficulty, the new skills and attitudes required of them are an essential element in what we are accustomed to label, far too glibly, "technology" and "technological change."

If we decide to preserve, or, more probably, to do no more than record a particular factory or canal or mill, we are, I believe, committed to finding out as much as we can about the people who built and equipped it, with their own hands, and who worked in it. It is their monument, just as much as it is of the architects, engineers, financiers and others connected with it. We must learn to think of industrial archaeology in this democratic way if it is to become, not a donnish pastime, but part of the cultural heritage of a whole nation. Exactly the same is true of castles, cathedrals, great houses and other traditionally fashionable and cherished types of monument. It is as absurd and unfair to talk of Wren's St Paul's as of Brunel's Great Western Railway.

⁶ *The Archaeology of the Industrial Revolution*. Edited by BRIAN BRACEGIRDLE. Heinemann, £7

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HAVING SAID THIS, it is refreshing to find that the new guide book⁷ to the Museum of the North-East at Beamish has something very rare and daring on its cover, a man, an elderly man sitting by the fire in a miner's kitchen. Beamish was established in 1970, "to study, collect, preserve and exhibit buildings, machinery, objects and information, illustrating the historical development of industry and the way of life of the North of England." Within such a context, industrial archaeology—and Beamish is full of industrial archaeology—has some point and meaning. Isolate it and it becomes dangerously arid.

There are those, blessed with a strong imagination, who can bring the dead bones of the past alive without help from museum curators or anyone else. Others need a little encouragement, and it is interesting to see what Beamish feels it can usefully offer them. This is, one remembers, an open-air museum and almost everything there—cottages, trams, a railway station, shops—is brought to the site from other parts of the North-East and reassembled on a carefully planned layout. These buildings, we are told, "are to be furnished or equipped as they once were, thus enabling the visitor to imagine himself experiencing a moment in history." Some examples of this "historic experience" are given. "A pitman's cottage could give girls an opportunity to try baking bread in the coal-fired oven, letting the dough rise in front of the fire. Or wash-day could be experienced, heating water in the side boiler and using a posser and mangle." As a change from this, there is "the opportunity to use a 1920s classroom with uncomfortable long bench-seated desks, old black-board, ink-wells and abacus." Eventually, pit-sawing, butter- and cheese-making, candle-making and rope-making are to be added to the list. In every case, the equipment used is genuine. The museum is sure this is essential if the aim of increasing historical awareness and understanding is to be realised.

Surely this is what industrial archaeology must be aiming at, if it is to have significance at all? On the face of it, Mr Riden would seem to agree. "The ultimate aim of the subject," he believes, "is to assist in the understanding of the process by which our industrial economy and society has evolved." But what does he, or Mr Bracegirdle or Mr Trinder, mean by "understanding"? Is it a purely intellectual affair, or does it go beyond this, so that one feels what it was like to be a foundry hand, or a boatman, or a woman with a broken leg or ten children, in Coalbrookdale in 1800? Is it, we may not unreasonably ask,

⁷ Beamish, 1973.

academically respectable for an industrial archaeologist to feel the past? Or, for the sake of his

reputation, must he send his heart to sleep and confine his activities to his head?

Romans & Germans

English Views of European History—By JOHN BOSSY

ENGLISH HISTORIANS may have their faults, but at least they do not support an orthodoxy. Here are three different books. They cover a span from ancient Athens to the scientific revolution of the 17th century, and range from the plains of material life to the wilder shores of occult speculation. What they have in common is dissatisfaction with the framework of political history (classical and modern) as it was constructed in 19th-century Germany; on the other hand, they are all in various ways more indebted to German academic traditions than to any others. None of them seems particularly impressed by recent historiographical developments in France, if one may judge by their hostility to quantification—"current number fetishism" as one of them calls it—and the sketchiness of their maps. They also have in common a high regard for the English language and for the virtues of brevity.

As one whose last contact with ancient history dates from twenty years ago, I shall hardly rate as a professional critic of M. I. Finley; just as well maybe, to judge by some of his footnotes. That said, I must say that his *The Ancient Economy* gripped from the first page.¹ What is on the first page is a discussion of the classical sense of the word "economics" as social, not economic in our sense at all: the science of the domestic sphere. It retained this meaning until the 18th century, and not surprisingly if, as Finley says, the primary object of "oeconomics", transmitted by the Romans as the *familia*, remained the basis of European society until the same period.

This clarification is a guide to the theme of the book, which is the inapplicability of the science of "economics" as now understood to the realities of the ancient world. In the modern sense, the ancient world *had* no economy; classical authors did not think in "economic" terms, not because they were too snobbish or *littérateurs*, but because there was no such subject for them to think about. Why? Because what

kept people alive was the "oeconomy", not the economy. Barring the civilisations of the Near East, which Finley excludes from his discussion even where, as in Egypt, they were brought within the bounds of the Roman Empire, domestic self-sufficiency was both the ideal and the practice; the Empire was in no sense an economic unit or "world market", subject to booms and slumps or demographic crises or price revolutions which may be revealed by quantitative investigation, nor to class conflicts on the conventional model.

So much for Rostovtseff. So much, I think, for Pirenne. And so much, I have a feeling, for Braudel as well. Finley's range of reference and comparison is so wide that I cannot believe his lack of a mention of Braudel is quite accidental: a Finley-Braudel contest for the heavyweight championship of the Mediterranean is something I should go a long way to see. (If he is limbering up for this, I think Finley might reconsider his view that the Mediterranean is "no place for nomadic peoples", and he may be vulnerable to a Braudelian comment about historians whose view does not reach more than a short distance above sea level. There must have been some events up there, even in the ancient world.) But I would not wish him to have been distracted from his superbly conducted argument as it proceeds from his general statement of position to particular exemplifications in respect of the upper-class milieu, slavery, landlord-peasant relations, the city and the state.

It is certainly some kind of a tribute to Christianity that Finley's ancient society looks so different without it: no qualms about the solid merit of wealth, no notion of sin, "little sympathy and no pity" for the very poor. All this, though, if I understand him, was the reverse side of an idea of property which distinguished Greeks and Romans from older civilisations and provided the basis on which could be erected Cicero's ideal of the leisured, liberal man. He takes this ideal as genuinely representative, objecting rather tartly to suggestions that it did not really govern behaviour or formed a feeble disguise for entrepreneurial ambitions.

¹ *The Ancient Economy*. By M. I. FINLEY. Chatto & Windus, £3.50.

If you think this view has been exploded when you discover that the noble Brutus lent money on a vast scale and at exorbitant interest, I think Finley will persuade you to think again. Personally, I found his account of the ancient theory and practice of moneylending extraordinarily interesting, implying as it does the absence of the notion of social brotherhood on which the Jewish and later Christian prohibition was founded. So with slavery. Greece and Rome were "the first genuine slave societies in history", more like the American South than anywhere else, but neither the slave body itself nor those who rose out of it towards citizenship through managerial and other occupations can be thought of as forming a class. Citizens and slaves might do the same jobs, like farming or building temples, since the definition of a slave was not economic but social and legal: that of belonging in a particular way to somebody else's *familia*. There was no ancient word for Labour, and no labour revolts.

Finley's working out of the primacy of the "oeconomic" over the economic throughout the activities of the ancient world is relentless, often funny, and informed with a lively sense of European perspective: the Cloth Halls and guilds of medieval Europe (for their absence in the classical city), Luther (on Rome as an everlasting parasite), Hume (but not, interestingly enough, Gibbon), *Oblomov*, Max Weber have all been harnessed to the chariot and made their contribution to the general effect of faintly gladiatorial mastery. I cannot imagine that even the ranks of Tuscany will forbear to cheer.

IT IS HARD to know what lesson to draw from the fact that an ancient historian should be drawing attention to the originative role of Christianity while historians of Christianity feel obliged to embed their subject in the flux of human life. Few figures in Christian history would seem to invite a transcendental approach more clearly than Martin Luther: not long ago G. R. Elton, as if to clear away a pile of environmental debris, launched a book on Reformation Europe with a chapter baldly entitled "Luther." For A. G. Dickens this will not do. Rather as Braudel turned "Philip II and the Mediterranean" into the Mediterranean and Philip II, so Dickens has turned Luther and the German nation into "The German Nation and Martin Luther."² Was Luther indispensable? Dickens's conclusion, and the end of a final chapter on Reformation historiography which all should read, is on the whole not:

A hero of history is after all a creation of the people. . . . While Luther's own spirit lacked neither charisma nor intellect, it was the surge of forces within the nation . . . which elevated him to one of the rare titanic roles of western history. So chosen and so raised up, he became one of those who in posterity's wondering eyes have seemed to preside over the breaking of nations. Even so, historical realism clearly obliges us to explore a host of causal dimensions, amongst which the biographical remains but one. The greater the hero, the more pressing the obligation.

Dickens, as one may see, is very quotable, though no gladiator: compare his comment on traditional church history, "that odd abstraction from the fabric of human experience", with some of Finley's sharper remarks. This is not to say that he has no strong views; one not difficult to detect is a settled conviction of the outrageous effrontery of the medieval church in presenting itself as a proper embodiment of Christian community. I think it is fair to say that a belief that this view was widely shared by the average man is an essential plank of the interpretation of events offered here. I would not claim that it is mistaken, though I do have reservations about it: it might, for example, be open to the objection raised by Finley (after Louis Dumont) that modern men find it hard to make any sense of the notion of hierarchy.

In any case, Dickens's Luther, though he comes in a dense intellectual context both humanistic (emphasised) and scholastic (rather played down), is chiefly a man at the heart of a national storm composed of many elements. The sign of its coming was a persistence in Germany of millenarian notions associated with hatred of the papacy and issuing in a popular prophetic vision of the Empire revived; they merged with the cult of the German nation as developed by the humanists with their happy discovery of Tacitus's *Germania* and (often) their Alsatian urge for national self-assertion against the French. The storm broke, with the help of the printing press, in an orgy of popular polemic in the years immediately following Luther's personal revolt. Dickens takes this as the sign of a mass support which was not entirely clear about many matters which were important to Luther, but got the Bible firmly between its teeth.

The public in question is a city public: Dickens is noticeably inclined to identify the German nation with the population of German cities. In itself, I wonder if this emphasis is entirely justifiable: it may lead to giving Luther less than his due, since he was surely the one reformer who was primarily creative in a rural context. But there is a lot to be said for it historiographically, since it is here that German historians are finding the most interesting things to say about the social milieu of the Reformation, Schildhauer in the

² *The German Nation and Martin Luther*. By A. G. DICKENS. Edward Arnold, £3.75.

East, and Moeller in the West. I am not sure that their points of view are really compatible: class-struggle in the Baltic towns and a communalism of civic togetherness in the cities of the south-west imply some rather basic differences in what one means by "society", not unlike those between economics and "oeconomics." It takes a particular sort of empiricism, a special compound of realism and imagination, to reconcile them as they are reconciled here; if anything, I think the East has got slightly the better of the bargain.

THERE IS NOT MUCH society of any sort in the world of *Rudolf II*.³ I must admit that I began it with keen expectations, and found them in the end rather disappointed. The late 16th-century German Hapsburgs were a strange lot, and their environment will be obscure to most of us, something seen from the train as one travels from the Peace of Augsburg to the Thirty Years' War. In this setting R. J. W. Evans has found a cosmic drama going on: "Rudolfine Prague was the last, in some ways the greatest manifestation of a universalism doomed by the rise of religious faction, *raison d'état* and the empirical world-view." Not just the political universalism of the Empire in which Evans is not specially interested, but a mental universalism obsessed by occult correspondences, and looking to the mind to reveal the harmony of the world. We are in short in Frances Yates country, where many gripping hours may be spent, but somehow this part of it struck me as rather dull. It is partly that the average level of intellectual activity in the Emperor's environment was not especially high, and partly that Evans seems unwilling to play for popularity by telling us much about people who mattered, like Kepler. But I think it is also something about the subject: the more you try to point it at the real world, the more it seems to point in the opposite direction. Here is a passage from Jung which Evans quotes; I translate it as best I can:

Alchemy represents something like a subterranean current beneath the Christianity which dominates on the surface. It relates to it as a dream to consciousness; and as dreams compensate the conflicts of consciousness, so alchemy attempted to fill up the gaps left open by the tension of opposites in Christianity.

This is surely trying too hard, and I think it helps to explain why this learned, intelligent and beautiful book seems suspended in mid-air, like Rudolf in his castle above Prague.

³ *Rudolf II and his World: A Study in Intellectual History, 1576-1612*. By R. J. W. EVANS. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, £7.50.

HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY FROM PENGUINS



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Form & Content

19th-Century England—By E. P. HENNOCK

THE ESSAY has become the favourite form for the study of urban life in the 19th century. It is not hard to see why. The abundance of material that has survived is one reason; the complexity and diversity of urban life in a country in which towns were becoming larger, more numerous, and increasingly representative of society as a whole, is another. It is not merely that after the mid-century urban society in its various forms made up half of English society as such. It also accounted for more than its fair share of historical records, for it was more closely observed and more fully administered than any other part. This was particularly true of the larger towns that have increasingly attracted our attention because of the crucial role they played as the growing-points of the new society. The essay is the answer for writer and reader alike to a situation in which the amount and complexity of information available has increased, while the attention that readers tend to give to a single book is probably getting less. While nothing can make real pretensions to completeness, the essay obviously makes no such claims and nothing of the kind is expected of it. But a good essay is satisfying in its own way and still leaves the reader time to taste the pleasures of diversity.

These reflections are prompted by the appearance of *The Victorian City*.¹ Bound in two enormous volumes, this work runs to close on a thousand pages. But appearances can be deceptive and no one should be put off by its physical immensity and solidity. This is merely a large collection of essays, and its apparent monumental character is due entirely to the remarkable energy of the two editors, one active on each side of the Atlantic, in soliciting, coordinating and organising as many as 38 different pieces from a total of 40 contributors. I should add that it is also due to its price and considerable weight. Such volumes are difficult to own and difficult to hold in one's hand, and therefore difficult to treat in the way that books of essays should be treated. The sooner the publishers bring out a paperback edition in four manageable volumes the better.

I can think of nothing that would be lost by such a sub-division. For whether he reads the essays in their order or not, the reader will soon discover the essential diversity of what has been enclosed within these apparently unifying covers. Diversity of subject and of form. There is the survey written by authors who have already had their say on the subject in detail elsewhere, and are able to maintain a sense of proportion within the limitation of the form (e.g. Simmons, Keating, Collins). Others are more tentative incursions into a largely uncharted field, interesting as far as they go and charming in their modesty (e.g. Best, Kent). Yet others are really reports from the frontiers of research, full of detail that will, presumably one day form part of a book with its own as yet unrevealed perspective. Some are just fanciful, or slight, or both.

There is one feature of the book which in the end may prove to have been its most important characteristic. It contains 434 illustrations of outstanding quality, yet this is no mere picture book. With a few exceptions these pictures, be they reproductions of photographs, paintings or of graphical work, illustrate points in the essays and are as integral a part as the written text. Such an outstanding contribution as that of Nicholas Taylor on "The Awful Sublimity of the Victorian City" would have been impossible but for the illustrations. While in some cases the pictures are an essential feature of the essays, in others the relation is reversed, and the pictures are the real subject matter of the text. These essays examine the kind of visual evidence available, give information on where collections are to be found, on the processes and the conventions through which that evidence has been filtered. The superb quality of the early photographs from the Wilson Collection at Aberdeen will be sending many a historian to the far north in quest of material.

One final point must be made, even though I am not the first to have noticed it. There is in the whole book nothing quite like the opening essay by Eric Lampard. It strains the essay form and bursts triumphantly through its limitations. It is over fifty pages long and heavy going, but it is the most memorable contribution in the book, for it does what no one else has even attempted. It provides a framework for the study of the Victorian city. It is in terms of birth-rates and

¹ *The Victorian City: Images and Realities*. Edited by H. J. DYOS and MICHAEL WOLFF. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2 vols., £27.

death-rates that the phases in the history of towns can be charted. Lampard is the only one capable of talking in terms of change and continuity, and the only one who does not treat the British urban development in isolation from the rest of the world. None of his fellow-contributors availed themselves of what he has to offer, but one has the feeling that in future at least some of them will.

THE CURRENT INTEREST in the social investigations sponsored from 1849-1851 by the *Morning Chronicle* owes much to the discovery that many of the articles that Henry Mayhew contributed to that series had never been included in his famous four-volume work, *London Labour and the London Poor*. The publication of a selection of these articles in *The Unknown Mayhew*, edited by E. P. Thompson and E. Yeo,² drew attention to the other articles by other investigators that formed a part of the same series and that dealt with conditions in provincial England and in foreign countries. The complete provincial series is being published by Frank Cass in seven volumes, but in *The Victorian Working Class* we are offered a selection dealing with both London and the provinces.³ It is a mere fragment of the total but makes a sizeable book of over 300 pages. Of these, 70 pages are devoted to Mayhew's description of the London trades, a decision that most people will regret, since we can already buy the far more generous selection by Thompson and Yeo for £1 as a Penguin Classic.

The real interest of this selection lies therefore in the material from the provinces. It must be said straight away that it is not in the same class. Mayhew possessed a marvellous ear for the actual speech of those he interviewed. No one steps out of the pages of these articles from the provinces with the same arresting vividness. The tone is that of the middle-class reporter and will be familiar to anyone who has read the famous mid-century investigations. But the merit of the series lies in the reminder of the sheer variety of condition. The babies of Manchester textile workers, drugged by their nurses with opium during the day and again by their exhausted mothers at night, are there. But so are the fishermen of Cornwall, where the owner of the nets took three times as large a share of the common catch as did the owner of the boat, and

the self-governing community of quarry-men at Swanage who were kept so short of cash that they habitually used bread as currency. This is a book for browsing and an antidote to stereotypes.

Of course what is selected depends in the end on what the editors were looking for. We may be grateful that in their desire to sell the book to both history and sociology students the publishers chose two editors with different preoccupations. To R. W. Wainwright these pieces illustrate the decay of old skilled trades, the farmers' oppression of the rural poor, the prevalence of sub-contract relations in the economy and the changing pattern of work and leisure. To P. E. Razzell they provide material with which to test the simple classification of workers into "deferential," "proletarian" and "privatized" that has become a favourite tool of sociologists. It soon becomes clear that this will not work for the mid-19th century, and the additional classification based on psychological concepts that Mr Razzell favours would require very different evidence from that presented here. But even those not wedded to the views of either editor will find the book good reading.

However, not all recent history books are miscellanies. In editing the selection of documents published as *Class and Conflict in Nineteenth-Century England 1815-1850*, Patricia Hollis

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² *The Unknown Mayhew*. Edited by E. P. THOMPSON and EILEEN YEO. Merlin Press, £3.25, Penguin, £1.

³ *The Victorian Working Class: Selections from Letters to the 'Morning Chronicle'*. Edited with introductions by P. E. RAZZELL and R. W. WAINWRIGHT. Frank Cass, £6.50.

knows exactly what she wants her readers to learn and sets about her task with pedagogic determination.⁴ This too is a book on the working class. It shows very well the strength of the approach to history through documents and its weakness. A long opening section deals with concepts of class and with the different ways in which society was analysed in class terms in those years. This is excellently done. There is no better way of introducing the reader to a body of ideas than by this method of the well-chosen extracts carefully juxtaposed. Contrasts can be made and developments pointed out with the minimum of fuss. Again in the third and final section the same method works well for the same reason. But the main body of the work deals with political action, and here the documentary approach is less satisfactory. In politics nothing stands still, the importance of any one document depends too much on circumstances, and today's plan is overtaken by tomorrow's event. For this sort of thing the narrative method is best. Documents like the Chartist Petition of 1842 or the speeches of prisoners on trial tell us about the rhetoric of a political movement, but little about the action taken, its timing or the momentary relation of tactics to strategy. Dr Hollis does her best in the short introduction but it is an impossible task. Examples of different strokes are not a commentary on a cricket match.

The most surprising thing about the book is its exclusive concern with "the attitudes and relations of working men." Dr Hollis tells us so from the beginning and thereafter sticks to her brief. Yet the book claims to be about class and conflict from 1815–1850, years during which many of the middle classes were equally class-conscious and equally engaged in class-conflict with those above them and below. Such matters are ignored except when they reinforce working-class conflict or else distract from it. The class-consciousness of the middle classes is not a subject in its own right in the book; the working-class perspective is automatically assumed. Such assumptions tell us more about present-day fashions in history than about the past.

NEITHER A MISCELLANY of essays nor a collection of documents, *Children in English Society*, vol. 2, by Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewitt is the sort of book that is actually written, not compiled.⁵ Volume 1 appeared in 1969 and

took the subject from Tudor times to the 18th century. Volume 2 takes the story to the Children Act of 1948. The authors have found an excellent subject. Of course there are children in *The Victorian City*, vagrant children, dying children, not to mention the children who 70 years later told Paul Thompson's tape-recorder all about their family life. There are children in the *Morning Chronicle* articles too, cooking fish on Cornish beaches, arranging buttons in rows in Birmingham or stealing wood in rural Somerset. But Pinchbeck and Hewitt give them a book all to themselves and they certainly deserve it.

In a sense they deserve more than even these authors are prepared to give them. They deserve to be seen, as the title of the book implies, first and foremost as normal members of English society. But the idea of this book originated in lectures given to child care officers in training. In consequence the authors approach their subject through the pathological rather than the normal. A preoccupation with the development of the social services and of charitable institutions dominates the book. We read about children only when they are regarded as social problems. A sense of the normal functioning of society is missing and, although both authors have taught in university departments of sociology, there is little sociological awareness in the book. The organising concepts are drawn instead from the vocabulary of social workers, and children are presented with social workers' labels round their necks. Pauper children, vagrant children, illegitimate children, criminal children, ill-treated and neglected children, children from broken homes – each category has a chapter to itself. In the practice of social work such classification has tended to lead to compartmentalised attitudes, each category being treated without too much regard to children elsewhere, and something of this approach is also noticeable in the book. Chapters exist very much in their own right, and since in each the authors tend to act as rapporteurs of the existing monograph material the perspective shifts and the result is fragmented.

There is another sense in which the preoccupation of the training course for social workers shows. Oddly enough there are some chapters in which the child itself is hardly visible, and we move in a world of Acts of Parliament, and of institutions with their rules and regulations. We find out more about Mrs Trotter or Mary Carpenter than about the children for whom they worked. Yet every now and then the veil is lifted and we are faced with the children themselves, crowding round the single candle in a Northamptonshire lace school in the early 19th century, or standing about "like moulting crows" in an Edwardian workhouse.

⁴ *Class and Conflict in Nineteenth-century England, 1815–1850*. Edited by PATRICIA HOLLIS. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £4.50

⁵ *Children in English Society*. Vol. II: *From the Eighteenth Century to the Children Act 1948*. By IVY PINCHBECK and MARGARET HEWITT. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £4

The picture of the lace school comes from the most vivid of the chapters in the book. In writing of children as wage earners in early industrialism the authors are drawing on their own earlier work on women workers in industry and come nearest to placing children in their normal social setting. Yet even here it is really the problem of the factory child that they are writing about and other children are brought in only to show that the factory child was not as unique as has sometimes been supposed. There is the same old-fashioned air about their treatment of this subject as in the rest of the book, and they do not seem aware that the debate has shifted, and that historians are now less interested in the difference between factory workers and workers in domestic industry than in the effect of industrialisation in both sectors of the economy. By ignoring the work of E. P. Thompson and Neil Smelser and fighting old battles over again they have missed an opportunity.

Yet the subject of the book is one of which we shall undoubtedly hear more. The study of the family has become a major interest for the present generation of historians. They are reading sociologists, not for their views about the past, for these are almost certain to be fanciful and are already being demolished by demographic historians. They are reading them for the questions that they raise. But in the historical field apart from demography the French and the Americans are far ahead of anything that has been written here.⁶

URBAN SOCIETY, the working classes, the growth of state provision (for this is the real theme of *Children in English Society*)—it is no accident that my list of books has included at least one example of each kind. For these are major areas for the historian of the 19th century and have been for some time. Add for balance chapters on rural society, the middle and upper classes and economic change and you have a basic framework for an introduction to the social history of England. This is roughly what Dorothy Marshall has done in writing *Industrial England 1776–1851* for those who want something short and manageable.⁷ This is no reference book but one intended to be read. It pioneers no startling new approach, but is full of good sense.

⁶ e.g. Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood* (translated from the French by Robert Baldick, London, 1962); David Hunt, *Parents and Children in History* (New York, 1970); John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (Oxford, 1970).

⁷ *Industrial England 1776–1851*. By DOROTHY MARSHALL. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3

It is a real book in the sense that the chapters hang together and complement each other well.

Naturally there are difficulties in writing such a book. One of them is to decide how much attention to pay to the diversity of life. Some authors place their faith in statistics; Dr Marshall has only four graphs and no tables, and obviously does not expect her readers to be numerate. Since too much emphasis on diversity only confuses the reader, and one sketch from life is more effective than ten, the real difficulty is to know what to choose as typical. To this problem Dr Marshall has no satisfactory answer any more than the rest of us. But she does have a preference for drawing her examples from fiction rather than from fact. "In some ways fiction is a better guide to the norm than fact, for whereas the historian is faced by the endless variety of the individual the novelist tends to reflect the contemporary image", she writes in justification of her copious references to Trollope, Dickens or Mrs Gaskell. Of course this begs many questions, but if one is not prepared to beg questions one will never write a History of English Society in just over two hundred pages, and in her case that would have been a pity.

IT IS NOTORIOUS that the difficulties of writing such history books become greater the nearer one gets

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PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

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to the present. In producing *The Making of Modern English Society from 1850*, the final volume in the same series, Janet Roebuck has certainly not overcome them.⁸ Since she also lacks Dr Marshall's gifts as a writer, her generalisations fall in dull thuds on the ear. Many of them are of the kind that pass for historical knowledge among sociologists but are quite unproven. The information that is needed to construct a history of English Society in this period certainly exists, but anyone who hopes to get at it must be prepared to wrestle with statistics. Dr Roebuck shows no sign of wishing to do more than raid this kind of material for the occasional figure.

If I wanted to find a book that conveyed to children what their elders remembered but they themselves have never known, and which took in

the more distant past as well, I would put my money on *Britain Transformed* by V. T. J. Arkell.⁹ In a much shorter space it covers the same time-span as the two previous works put together. Its general approach to the 18th and 19th centuries is similar to Dr Marshall's and the whole is immensely enlivened by illustrations on almost every page. Writing for school children, Mr Arkell is not afraid to give tables of figures, and he does so in a perfectly manageable form. His choice of pictures is brilliant. There is no indication at what age group this book is aimed, but the written style is undemanding. Having enjoyed it myself, I shall pass it to my fifteen-year-old daughter, who is working for examinations with books that are supposed to be more advanced but lack the flair that Mr Arkell has displayed. It should restore her faith in history books. But then, I had forgotten that she is already feeling much more cheerful, having just finished Raphael Samuel's exuberant essay on gypsies, tramps, and other nomads in *The Victorian City*.

⁸ *The Making of Modern English Society from 1850*. By JANET ROEBUCK. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £2.40.

⁹ *Britain Transformed. The Development of British Society since the mid-eighteenth Century*. By V. T. J. ARKELL. Penguin Education, 80p.

Labor Omnia Vincit

A senile townscape has its heart cut out
for a fresh disfiguring. "The new
by-pass will, after all, go through
the town centre."

The minarets of a tilting cinema—
one foundation sunk in the rubbery river
that doesn't grant that lightening of the heart
expected of water—

will make a fine, sclerosis dust
when the new rovers, craftsmen's sons,
tear it down for motherly icons
of the mythic North to clean from their furniture.

As I scavenge the sites and the vast dustbins
they've made of the quarries whence it came, for stone
lintels to restore my home, I recognise
a drunken recklessness in their dusty eyes.

Glyn Hughes

PRESS

Quis Custodiet—

or who shall guard the Guardian?

By Max Beloff



NOT SO LONG ago intellectual fashion heralded the disappearance of the newspaper as the main link between the individual and his world, and forecast a future in which this place would be occupied by television—the instant illusion of partaking in great events. We now know this to be untrue. There are enormous difficulties in the way of serious reporting through television and serious discussion in depth of the implications of passing events. What television can do is to exploit or thwart desires for pageantry, ceremonial, and colour. It cannot touch the intellectual except on the rarest occasions. Princess Anne's wedding was worth a whole year's serious discussion programmes. Party political broadcasts are a natural signal to switch off. It was worth travelling miles to see and hear Gladstone or Lloyd George; no one would bother to go next door to see any current politician on the box. Indeed, as Mr John Whale reminds us in his excellent study of the political significance of the press,¹ television itself is wholly parasitic on newspapers where serious subjects of long-term significance are concerned. Only a paper of record preserves the records; the word is all.

To this argument, Mr Whale adds a more immediately topical point. It is his belief that modern urban life is more vulnerable to violence than the less complicated societies of the past and that the tendency of the visual media is to make

violence acceptable and even to glorify it. Only the newspaper can stand for reason in such situations:

In great things and small, then, the movement against reason is a fact, even if not a totally new fact; and the journalist's business is to resist it. There are other people who can discharge the task with more authority in the end—politicians, public servants, specialist academics, historians; but the task falls to the journalist sooner than to them, because of the frequency of publication, and less avoidably. He is not ill equipped for the exercise: words are his chosen weapons. He ought to confront the partisans of violence, official or insurgent, with the deeds done in their name and the alternatives still open. He ought to see that the whole facts of a politician's case are presented. He ought to be a steward of the word.

But one says "newspapers of record," or what is known as "the quality press." And here, at least in Britain, one pauses. For one knows that the "quality press" has for some time been waging a struggle for survival—neither the *Times* nor the *Guardian* are money-spinners—and that in waging this struggle they may make concessions which render the "quality" itself something open to question. This is not to say that these difficulties may be entirely, or even largely, the fault of the papers themselves. The press is a social phenomenon and particular aspects of it may only flourish under very particular social conditions. In his revealing and sensitive autobiographical volume, Mr John Pringle (who worked in England for both the *Times* and the *Guardian* as well as for the *Observer*) writes that there are moments when he feels "that the whole age in which the 'quality press' was considered important may be over. . . ."²

There is thus an internal and an external side to the question. A newspaper is today a great commercial enterprise, fighting for survival in the market. (No state-owned newspaper would be regarded as coming into the "quality" category—imagine having indexed volumes of *Pravda* as your only record of events of the last half-century!) It fights for survival under appalling difficulties, not least of which (at any rate in this country and the United States) is the attitude of the printing unions who use their position to enforce manning standards which can drive and have driven newspapers out of circulation, thus creating the very unemployment which their claims are intended to avoid. No other unions would seem to have so strong a death-wish where their own industry is concerned. For these reasons, a newspaper must give increasing weight to the managerial aspects of its operations at the expense of the editorial. On the other hand, there are very strong grounds for believing that what makes a great newspaper is the capacity of the Editor himself, and that all great periods in the

¹ *Journalism and Government*. By JOHN WHALE. Macmillan, £2.25.

² *Have Pen: Will Travel*. By JOHN DOUGLAS PRINGLE. Chatto & Windus, £2.50.

history of any newspaper have personal rather than institutional explanations. (Great headmasters have the same effect; one would like to add great University Vice-Chancellors, were there not such good grounds for regarding the breed as extinct.)

IT COULD BE ARGUED THAT a modern newspaper is so large an organisation on the editorial as well as the managerial side that this view is exaggerated and that it would more properly apply to weekly journals. It is indeed clear as we are reminded by Mr C. H. Rolph's vivid biography of Kingsley Martin that a weekly does almost wholly depend upon personal qualities.³ While Kingsley Martin was editing the *New Statesman* it was widely read even in circles where its general political tone made no appeal. After he left it a decline set in, despite the fact that two of his successors (John Freeman, R. H. S. Crossman) were men of undoubted distinction in their own walks of life. Now it is probably past saving. But a close reading of Rolph's book leaves one more than ever baffled as to the qualities that make for a great editor. Kingsley Martin was not a very nice man; he did not develop the scholarly qualities that he showed in his early years and was not a learned man or even a particularly well-informed one on much that matters in the world; his judgment was often at fault and sometimes badly at fault. Yet he was a very successful editor. Mr Rolph does not attempt to analyse the reason for Martin's success but he may in one passage give a clue to part of the reason.

"Take it for seven years," said Leonard Woolf when he heard about Keynes's *New Statesman* suggestion. "Not for longer because journalism rots the brain..." So Kingsley took it and stayed 30 years without manifest cerebral damage. Woolf always knew that he *would* remain, and that the excitement and immediacy of it—the being at the centre of things, meeting important people in political life—would always overcome the attraction (which never weakened) of a return to academic life. It is perhaps this sense of being "on the inside" and being able to communicate that excitement to those who are not, that makes

the editor. But while Rolph may be right in saying that there was no "manifest brain damage", could not that be because the ability to think things out in longer-range perspectives and with greater rigour which distinguishes the intellectual academic from the journalist was lacking from the beginning? It is odd to think that the university post Martin was offered, and by which he was tempted, was the chair of International Relations at Aberystwyth eventually filled by E. H. Carr whose writings were to prove more influential in affecting British thinking on foreign affairs than any of Martin's—the *Times* mattering so much more than the *New Statesman*—but who was (and is) as quintessentially the don as Kingsley Martin was quintessentially a journalist.

John Pringle had every quality—except physical stamina—that would seem to be called for in an editor of a quality newspaper: wide interests; an attractive style; political understanding; human sympathies. One wonders a good deal as to what would have happened had he ever come to edit either the *Times* or the *Guardian*. His experiences with the *Sydney Morning Herald* with its curious organisation that gave the editor no scope for imprinting his personality on the whole paper are not sufficient guidance. One likes to think that Pringle might have saved the *Guardian* from the major error of judgment that brought about the move to London, and the dropping of *Manchester* from the title of the paper. To go to London was to cut the roots which bound the paper to another England remote from the factitious values of the metropolis, able to voice the aspirations of producers not just of consumers, and with the ability to speak to readers and to governments with the authority that a certain distance confers.

When C. P. Scott had confidential conversations with the Prime Minister and other leading figures, and when the practice was renewed by his successor but one, W. P. Crozier, part of the reason which led political leaders to think they were worth time and trouble was no doubt the fact that they were very distinguished men.⁴ I think that Pringle is, as he admits, a little less than fair to Crozier. No doubt, he had his particular axes to grind; what good editor has none? But they were respectable axes and they were in tune with what had been the spirit of the paper. Better to write three successive leaders castigating the sins of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem than to find reasons for going along with the demands of Arab rulers who happen to live on the unearned increment of other people's discovery and exploration of the oil resources of the lands which they claim to possess! The puritanism of Cross Street would, one feels, not have been over-sympathetic to a Sheikdom's quest for ever more concubines and Cadillacs.⁵

³ *Kingsley: The Life, Letters and Diaries of Kingsley Martin*. By C. H. ROLPH. Gollancz, £4.

⁴ See *The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott 1911–1928*. Edited by TREVOR WILSON. Collins, £3.50. *Off The Record: Political Interviews 1933–1945*. By W. P. CROZIER. Edited by A. J. P. TAYLOR. Hutchinson, £6.

⁵ One such potentate recently visited a major European centre of Middle Eastern Studies. Much trouble was taken to show off the library and at the end it was delicately hinted that His Highness would no doubt like to make some financial contribution to its resources. "I am sorry," said the Sheikh, "I am not interested in books... only in women and cars."

But another reason why the editors were welcome in Downing Street is that they came from and kept their distance. What Manchester said, what provincial England said, was thought to be worth hearing. And at a time when "devolution" and "decentralisation" are so much in vogue and when there does seem some revival of mid-Victorian civic patriotism in a number of cities—I am not sure admittedly how far Manchester is one of them—it is a paradox that England outside London is bereft of a voice.

BUT IT IS NOT ONLY in the personal relationships between those who write the news and those who make it that the secret of the "quality press" must be sought. Its own comment must, for it to have an impact, be inspired by a code of values that is both independent and coherent. This may mean that leaders and even occasional news reports are liable to verge on the didactic, to be a little like lay sermons—but that is not a fault.⁶ Moral indignation produces better journalism and better prose than the kind of sneering, know-all self-pity that is the hallmark of the contemporary British Left, and is all too often found among *Guardian* writers as well as being the dominant tone in its correspondence columns.

NEWSPAPER HISTORIES of any serious kind have been rare. They are not easy to write; and the most ambitious one in this country, the *Times* history, suffers particularly in its later volumes from adherence to the now disappearing emphasis on anonymity and will have to be rewritten at some time. The *Guardian* has been much more fortunate in its biographer.⁷ But since Mr David Ayerst is above all a loyal *Guardian* man, and disinclined to attempt iconoclasm it is as well to have John Pringle's splendid evocation of the old days at Cross Street, and some even less respectful revelations and ruminations from the most talented journalist produced by the *Guardian* in the inter-War years, Mr Malcolm Muggeridge.⁸

One can see why Muggeridge's breach with the *Guardian* was inevitable, and the reasons do credit to both sides in the dispute, and illuminate much of the difficulty involved in editing a quality paper. The distinction between news and com-

ment to which C. P. Scott attached great importance must seem a vital one. Give the facts—and, if you wish, through the leader column give your interpretation of them. But Muggeridge, a young Labour man, had suddenly come up against the reality of the socialist paradise in the Moscow of 1932; and the discovery and consequent revolution could not but affect his reporting. It was hard to report Show Trials or a Famine without showing the artificiality of both. Even in recollection there is no tranquillity when Russia is recalled:

"I tried to describe it all—the abandoned villages, the absence of livestock, neglected fields, everywhere famished frightened people and intimations of coercion, soldiers about the place, and hard-faced men in long overcoats. One particularly remarkable scene I stumbled upon by chance at a railway station in the grey early morning, peasants with their hands tied behind them being loaded on to cattle-trucks at gun-point . . . all so silent and mysterious and horrible in the half-light, like some macabre ballet. . . ."

"As it happened no other foreign journalist had been into the famine areas in the USSR except under official auspices and supervision, so my account was by way of being exclusive. This brought me no kudos and many accusations of being a liar, in the *Guardian* correspondence columns and elsewhere. I had to wait for Khrushchev—who surely knew the truth if anyone did, having himself been one of the chief terrorists in the Ukraine—for official confirmation. Indeed, according to him, my account was considerably under-stated. If the matter is a subject of controversy hereafter, a powerful voice on the other side will be Duranty's, highlighted in the *New York Times*, insisting on all those granaries overflowing with grain, those apple-cheeked dairymaids and plump contented cows, not to mention Shaw and all the other distinguished visitors who testified that there was not, and could not be, a food shortage in the USSR. I doubt if even Khrushchev's testimony let alone mine, will weigh against such honourable and distinguished witnesses." (*The Green Stick*)

And, after the artificial famine, the horror of the purges which again the well-meaning progressives of the West refused to understand:

"Even now it is difficult to grasp the magnitude of what happened; a stupendous horror film conceived in the narrow, suspicious mind of Stalin, and produced and directed by him, in which every single Soviet citizen, from the Baltic to Vladivostok, willy-nilly participated, whether as extras, or with speaking-parts. In Moscow, one sensed the omnipresent fear in frightened, furtive eyes; sniffed the sour body-smell it gave out, which still after all these years remains with me. The endless interrogations, interrogators themselves in time interrogated, until no one knew who was confessing what to whom, who were the judges and who the accused. A fear-some morality play in which it had to be terminably demonstrated that, the system being perfect, as were all who had been submitted to the great baptism of the Revolution, any imperfection, whether in the system, or in individual beneficiaries of it, could only be due to malign stratagems, saboteurs, wreckers; to plots and subornings and conspiracies engineered by the powers of darkness—

⁶ A selection of some of the *Guardian's* best and most typical writing is to be found in *The Guardian Omnibus, 1821-1971*. Edited by DAVID AYERST. Collins, £5.50.

⁷ *Guardian: Biography of a Newspaper*. By DAVID AYERST. Collins, £4.50.

⁸ *Chronicles of Wasted Time*. Vol. 1. *The Green Stick*. Vol. 2. *The Infernal Grove*. By MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE. Collins, £3 each.

capitalists, imperialists, colonialists and their running dogs. . . ."

What Muggeridge was employed for was straight reporting, but unless there were leader writers knowing the truth and willing to expound it, that might seem inadequate. Muggeridge was censored editorially as well as censored, and he resigned. The difficulty is that on the substance of what was going on in Russia, Muggeridge was right and the *Guardian* was wrong. A paper so sensitive and courageous when it came to reporting the Brown Terror was not prepared to shock "liberal" opinion by saying that the Red Terror was equally horrible.

As to why Muggeridge left the *Guardian*, Ayerst's account is no different in substance from Muggeridge's own. On the other hand, when Ayerst writes in a footnote that Muggeridge wrote a novel, *Picture Palace*, about his life in Manchester which was "withdrawn before publication" he omits the vital fact now revealed by Muggeridge that it was withdrawn because of a threat of a libel action from the *Guardian* itself!

The novel, along with all the work I had put into it and the hopes I had invested in it, was sunk without trace. This was the heaviest blow I ever received as a writer, and it came just when I was least equipped, financially or in any other way, to withstand it. At the time I raged inwardly at the *Guardian's*—as it seemed to me—contemptible hypocrisy in thus bringing about the suppression of a book, which though critical of itself, could not, by any stretch of the imagination, be said seriously to damage it commercially—the ground of its complaint. Even now I have to admit, if my eye happens to fall on some ardent protest in its columns against a move to ban an obscene publication or entertainment, on the ground that any infringement of the right of self-expression is indefensible, I remember—more I hope with a grin than a groan—

* Things go pretty far out on the *Guardian* these days. In an omnibus review of four books on Chile, the *Guardian* reviewer (Mrs Judith Hart, left-wing Labour M.P.) praises, naturally, Richard Gott's collection of Allende's speeches (Penguin, 40p), and attacks, of course, Robert Moss's sharp assessment of *Chile's Marxist Experiment* (David & Charles, £4.50). Mrs Hart rationalises her prejudices in a remarkable confession for a *Guardian* writer, usually so loyal to liberal ideals of thoughtfulness. Her involvement, as she admits, was "too deep" for her "ever to want to achieve . . . any kind of cool and uncommitted objectivity about the Chilean experiment and its ending."

Of Moss's book, Mrs Hart adds that "it is to be back in the Embassy drawing-rooms of Santiago" (decadent precincts which one would have thought she would never have been caught dead in). And did she truly mean that this was a critical voice "from which, clearly, heaven preserve any future Socialist government in Britain" (*Guardian*, 29 November 1973, p. 13)? How was heaven—or perhaps Mrs Hart's corps of ideological censors—going to arrange this convenient bit of thought control? Is the *Guardian's* famous motto now to be rewritten to read: Not all facts are sacred, not all comment is free . . . ?

how little such considerations weighed when it was a question of preventing the publication of *Picture Palace*.

One could of course argue that the whole thing is not all that significant—though it was important enough financially to Muggeridge at the time—and that the whole of Muggeridge's connection with the *Guardian* is more important for understanding his own spiritual odyssey than for understanding the *Guardian*. Nevertheless there are general lessons to be learned from the episode and its context. Just as the *Times* in the inter-War years was open to horror stories about the Bolsheviks even when they were not true, and suspicious of revelations about the Nazis even when they were, so the *Guardian's* tradition of righteous thunder from the Left rendered it open to self-deception. Not, of course, on the *New Statesman's* massive scale! Muggeridge is hardly persuasive in retrospect to lump W. D. Crozier in with Kingsley Martin, Bernard Shaw and the ineffable Webbs; and where the Soviet Union itself was concerned the cure administered by the Nazi-Soviet pact and many subsequent events was probably sufficient. But the "no enemies to the Left" syndrome can take other forms. The *Guardian's* coverage of Latin America is perhaps the most obvious case today.⁹ But this goes beyond the point at which Ayerst's brief ends.

THE ABILITY OF THE QUALITY PRESS to fulfil its role as informant must, to be sure, depend not only on an editor's own gifts but on his ability to command the services of gifted journalists. In that sense the *Guardian* in the last years of the Manchester era was very fortunate. Men were still willing to steep themselves in the life of other countries, to develop over years the equipment that sets apart the true reporter in depth from the here-today-gone-tomorrow writer. The difficulty is that the latter is more economical to use and perhaps easier to manage. There are now few places in the world where one would expect to find one's best source of information and understanding to be the local representative of one of Britain's quality papers. The chances are that he would just have come and just be going. Journalism today is a profession the glamour of which no longer compensates for the lack of material rewards; and some aspects of the journalistic temperament at its best can be satisfied in other ways. A young Darsie Gillie would probably have ended up as a professor; which would have been a pity for the *Guardian*. At one time there was hardly an institute in London dealing with contemporary matters that did not have an ex-*Observer* man as its head; a pity for the *Observer*.

A quality press also demands of its writers a concern with style; one is writing for tomorrow's

paper, but one must write as though for permanence. Such feeling for language is generally on the decline in Britain, and one has the feeling that it is no longer particularly valued by the papers themselves. Only two journalists regularly writing today give one the feeling that words are weapons: Bernard Levin and Peregrine Worsthorne. Indeed Worsthorne writing (in his column in the *Sunday Telegraph*) from a political position on the extreme opposite end of the scale to the *Guardian* tradition comes nearest of any contemporary journalist to reproducing in the modern idiom the gravitas of the old *Guardian* style, as exemplified for instance by J. L. Hammond. It may be that the poor technical quality of the present-day newspaper is discouraging. The *Guardian's* misprints have long provided innocent fun; the *Times* is catching up. One imagines that the revelation there that W. H. Auden's poetry was much influenced by "Yates" was the result of a story being dictated to the copy-room; a sub-editor up to his job might have queried: "Dornford, I suppose?"

It is also the case that newspapers have to take what they can get, and that what they often get under the guise of journalists are young men (and women) anxious to reform the world in some particular direction or with a strong party allegiance that may not necessarily be that of the paper they serve. The more a paper regards itself as managerially—rather than editorially—directed the easier it is for this bias to come through. The *Sunday Times* is perhaps the best example of a paper whose proprietor (Lord Thomson of Fleet) no doubt supports the simple virtues of private enterprise and patriotism; but this would not nowadays be the impression that the paper itself always makes. It is true that on basic issues in politics whether at home or abroad the editorial control is likely to be reasonably effective. One would not expect the *Sunday Times* or even the *Observer* to come out in favour of general nationalisation or unilateral disarmament. But on issues just outside the daily battle, on education for instance, the strength of the left-wing bias is hard to conceal. Where in the quality press has one been able to follow the powerful arguments against "comprehensive education" or to appreciate the folly and danger of so-called "student demands"? One sometimes wonders whether the editors of these journals, often welcomed in senior common-rooms, ever use what they learn there when it comes to choosing education correspondents (or to following what they write). If one wants to know what is happening in education one needs to read the *Daily Telegraph* which although in most ways our most professional newspaper would not normally be thought of as a "quality paper."

BUT SUCH CRITICISMS of the "quality press" and doubts about its future reflect a wider change in British society. The assumptions of the "quality press" in its heyday related to the existence of a fairly homogeneous social élite to which a paper appealed and whose views it strove to reflect. Today the notion of a single élite of this kind would be generally questioned. A more complex society includes a variety of élites often with little communication among themselves, and interested in very different things.

But two warnings should be uttered against following too far this familiar line of argument. In the first place, the process is incomplete—it remains true that a letter in the *Times* is still the best way of calling attention to a new idea or a particular cause. In the second place, the fact that there are many élites does not mean that there are none; City tycoons and trade-union leaders have to be taken into account as well as Cabinet Ministers and Bishops; but all of them still relate in some way to the real business of society, material or spiritual. What has been a weakness of the quality press, partly in its eagerness to keep up with the "trendy" young and partly in its search for circulation—a perfectly proper consideration—has been the creation of imaginary élites to which to appeal. The Tariq Alis, the Peter Hains, the Des Wilsons are not members of any élite at all, but some quality papers behave as though they were.

One obvious consequence of the breakdown of the idea of a single élite is the disappearance of the case for anonymity. In the "quality press" it has now virtually disappeared except in the case of "leaders" which are often the work of more than one editorial hand and which commit the paper collectively in a different way from its other columns. The old-style anonymity was, of course, part of a situation where "quality" dailies were backed up by monthlies and weeklies of similar calibre and style. (Only the *Economist* survives from that era—but that would be another story for which the materials are not to hand.)

THE CASE IS at its clearest when we look at book reviewing. In respect of book reviews (except for professional journals) we are now very badly served. The "Quality Sundays" devote much less space to books, and much of that is given over to allowing political and other "personalities" to show off rather than to serious consideration of important or would-be important works. One is thus thrown back on the *Times Literary Supplement* where the coverage is vast but wholly unreliable, since one cannot know what attempt has been made to match the reviewer to the book, only that from internal evidence the match is often

capricious and the result often bizarre.¹⁰ The *Economist* is absurdly arbitrary in deciding what to review, but the reviews themselves tend to be of higher quality. To me, as a long-time addict of both journals with all their faults, the thought of a new editor at the *T.L.S.*—John Gross, formerly assistant editor of *ENCOUNTER*, has just been appointed—and the hope that he might drop anonymity and play fair with the reader and book-buyer is an exciting one.

On the wider issue, what one feels is that the “quality press” has simply lost its way. One can of course take the Malcolm Muggeridge view that the public arena is anyhow so intrinsically absurd and that things are in reality so far from the images we form of them that it does not much matter how distorted the images are. But if we believe in any form of social action we do need to

know both what is happening in the world and what public events portend. We need news and we need analysis; otherwise we can react only to what appear to be a discontinuous series of unrelated crises. It is the function of a quality paper to perform this task, and for many decades the *Guardian* and other papers did just that.

But it can only be done by a newspaper, not by a magazine which exists for different purposes, whiling away a journey, for instance. The *Times* has resisted this temptation less well than the *Guardian*; but both have succumbed to it to an unnecessary degree. And that is why one turns to the *Daily Telegraph* before the *Times* or *Guardian*, to the *Sunday Telegraph* before the *Observer* or *Sunday Times*.

“*Wie es eigentlich gewesen*” is a motto for journalists not only for historians. In his days as a journalist this is what Malcolm Muggeridge believed. It was because he thought that the news pages were also a matter for the editor that John Pringle clashed with the proprietor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. A few more books as good as theirs and Ayerst’s and we shall begin to see the reasons for the decline of the “quality press” and, perhaps, how to cure it.

¹⁰ See, for example, Professor John Kelly’s searing critique of its Middle East reviewing: “T.L.S. in the Desert,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, May 1973. It would appear that similar criticisms can be levelled against the reviewing of books on South-East Asia. See the detailed letter from Professor C. D. Cowan in the same journal, October 1973.

A Painter

Marc Chagall knew nothing
About dialectics.

Gaily, daily, in Vitebsk,
Cows & horses danced in the air.

Superstructure he hopelessly
Muddled with structure.

Gaily, daily, in Vitebsk,
Cows & horses danced in the air.

After October, Chagall was
Commissar of the arts for a year. . . .

But was dismissed: The Man
Leaping Over The City.

Daily, daily, in Vitebsk,
Icons of Lenin & Stalin objectively stare.

John Matthias

LETTERS

Hope, Despair, & Violence

"IT IS NOT when hope flourishes", R writes (January), "but when it is extinguished that people take to the gun."

On the contrary, every attempt to assess objectively the relation between hope, despair, and the motivation to kill for political reasons suggests that hope and promise are more inflammatory than despair. Tocqueville thought so when he wrote *The Old Régime and the French Revolution* (1856), and later studies seem to have confirmed him. This theme can be read in Crane Brinton on *The Anatomy of Revolution* (1938), in Davies on the "Theory of Revolution" (*American Sociological Review*, 1962), in Geschwender's analysis of "Social Movements and Revolutions" (*Social Forces*, 1968), and in T. R. Gurr on *Why Men Rebel* (1970).

The occasions of our discontent are endless. We do not convert our private troubles into public issues and take up arms to resolve them out of the conviction that misery is our fate, but out of the promise that, this time, the homicide will make things better.

GWYNN NETTLER

University of Alberta,
Edmonton, Canada

Barzun and Mary Wollstonecraft

JACQUES BARZUN's reply to my letter (on Mary Wollstonecraft's estimate of Rousseau's limitations on women's education, February), does me an injustice. I nowhere suggest she was the only advocate of women's education; and as a biographer of both Thomas Paine and John Wilkes I am well aware of the Enlightenment writers. But she herself was a woman and therefore excluded from ENCOUNTER's slightly limiting title, *Men & Ideas*; and she wrote directly, in part, to refute at least some aspects of Rousseau.

The Enlightenment, as Professor Barzun says, was "rich in educated women"; but he might more aptly have written "rich in *rich* educated women". Mary was brought up in extreme poverty and was largely self-educated. She was, at the time she wrote *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*—before, not after, her stay in France, as Professor Barzun wrongly claims—over thirty years of age and totally self-dependent. She had tried to support her sisters by running a school (virtually the only "profession" then open to women), had failed, and was still living in comparative poverty writing learned reviews and translations for Joseph Johnson's radical *Analytical Review*. No one knew better the need for a form of *public* education enabling women to earn a living in professions alongside men.

It was from this point of view that she wrote and was grossly vilified (including by supposedly educated women relying on men for their support) for doing so.

It must be obvious from my quotations that Rousseau's conception of the *reason* for women's education was far different. After a lifetime of trying to earn respect and a living as an author and critic on supposedly non-feminine subjects (*i.e.* on exactly the same level as men) I can assure Professor Barzun that difficulties do remain: though this is generally more obvious in this country than his own. I hope, though, his reference to "the socially emancipating factory, typewriter, and department store" does not represent his criterion of the kind of employment most suitable to women! Shops and factories (and even the coal mines owned by the blue-stocking Elizabeth Montagu among others) employed women even in Mary Wollstonecraft's time, usually under appallingly degrading and ill-paid conditions, and these and domestic service were not what she meant by women's educative needs. Where self-support was concerned, I suggest Rousseau (thinking of Thérèse) may well have done so, at least outside the field of the more feminine type of novelist, although probably Mary did, in her thesis, overlook some aspects of *Emile*.

AUDREY WILLIAMSON

London

"Bourgeois Ideology"

I FEEL GREATLY ELATED after reading the letter by Mr J. L. B. Phillips ["Who's Afraid of Bourgeois Ideology?" ENCOUNTER, March]. There is a man who knows what bourgeois ideology is! He must tell us and the Russians more about it. Until he does, I still maintain that—strange as it may seem—Soviet leaders do not fear the "bourgeois ideology" but rather the attraction of the Western way of life, including blue jeans, *Beatles*, and the free press (to quote Mr Phillips). I have yet to find a Soviet leader who ever heard of *Areopagitica* (1644), let alone is "haunted by its spectre." Would it not be better to call blue jeans just blue jeans?

KLAUS MEHNERT

Freudenstadt,
Germany

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Violence, Real & Cinematic

ALEXANDER WALKER's right-minded, but diffuse, article—"The Case of the Vanishing Bloodstains" [ENCOUNTER, March 1973]—does not do justice to his own thesis linking the new cinema violence and the assassinations of the 1960s. Walker correctly connects the horror of Clyde (Bonnie and Clyde) Barrow's death with that of John Kennedy's. But he loses the connection in the later cinema which accentuates that "grey area of aesthetics": pitiless violence for the sake of violence.

Freud told us of how the Child resolves his Oedipal feelings by coming to identify himself with the Father, and how the Lycanthrope is driven by his fears into "becoming" the Wolf himself. Today's movie-goer is still watching the Kennedy assassination. But he is no longer on the Dallas sidewalk; he is on the roof-top. Desensitisation is not merely an unfortunate consequence of attending today's violent films; it is the viewer's unconscious purpose, accomplished partly by the vaccine-like technique of psychically absorbing doses of fearsome but harmless mock-violence and, thus, building resistance to news and memories of the real thing; and partly by the psychodramatic identification with the perpetrator of the violence, which supplants the unbearable identification with its victim. There is even an element of resentment against Kennedy for having wounded us so with his death; and perhaps he is symbolically killed (and his wife, incidentally, castigated) for having made such hurtful use of America's acceptance of him as its symbol. Thus after its initial grief, America has deserted to the other camp. It has come to the cinema for courses in violence, and elected Kennedy's opponent.

MARK LEVINSON

Haifa, Israel

Auden & Violence

HERE IN WESTERN CANADA I have just seen your issue of December 1973 containing Mr George Watson's

article "Were the Intellectuals Duped?" In the case of at least one intellectual, his conclusions are unjustified.

The late W. H. Auden's visit to Spain lasted from January to March 1937. Professor Monroe K. Spears' book *The Poetry of W. H. Auden* and the interview with the poet published in the *New York Times Magazine* of 8 August 1971 dispose of the legend that he served there in either a medical or any other capacity. In the month of his arrival he published in the *New Statesman* his only article on the situation in the country, making the harmless enough points that the people were running their society efficiently without the supervision of an upper class and that they were successfully defending their newly-found freedom against Franco. Auden's subsequent reticence about his Spanish trip (in conversation, as Mr Spender reports, as well as in print) seems to be explained by his contribution to James Pikes' symposium *Modern Canterbury Pilgrims* (1956). In this essay he revealed that the absence of priests and of functioning churches in Barcelona gave him a profound, unaccountable, and totally unexpected shock which helped to start him on the road back to Christianity. The ambiguous phrase "the necessary murder," which he used shortly afterwards in his poem "Spain," referred to the killing of an enemy in battle; he was taking, as he explained in a letter quoted by Professor Spears, the position that any killing of another human being is murder, a position which he upheld in "I Believe," an article contemporary with the poem. Finally, in quoting two versions of the last sentence of this article, Mr Watson fails to observe that both, in context, merely imply that in defence of civilised, rational, and democratic values against Nazism and its allies one should be prepared to risk one's own life and the lives of others. The only violence Auden supported was the violence entailed in self-defence.

HENRY SUMMERFIELD

*University of Victoria,
Canada*

"Unofficial Russia"

A Dissent about Dissidence—By KATHRYN B. FEUER

I HAVE LONG ADMIRED the work of Karel van het Reve on behalf of Soviet dissenters and their writings. Therefore I was dismayed to read the opening paragraphs of "Dissidents and the West" in your February issue, in which he maintains that most Sovietologists in the West have only lately become aware of the existence of "unofficial Russia." Even more astonishing is the implication that until recently Western students of Soviet literature were studying chiefly works approved by the régime, for in the context of the author's argument this is the inference to be drawn from his statement that "students of Russian literature actually read the verbatim reports of the Congresses of the Union of Soviet Writers."

First, I should like to say simply on the basis of my

own twenty years' experience as a graduate student and university teacher at a number of institutions in the United States and Canada, that such generalisations do not correspond to the facts in North America, and I have good reason to suppose that they are equally inapplicable to Britain and France. I could produce course reading-lists, programmes of scholarly meetings, indignant fulminations of Soviet *delegatsiya* members after they visit our departments. I could cite many published works, such as Patricia Blake's and Max Hayward's *Dissonant Voices in Soviet Literature* (1962). Instead I shall mention only two first-hand bits of personal evidence.

I was in the Soviet Union during the summer of 1956 and visited the Union of Soviet Writers. Perhaps

because I presented myself as a novelist rather than as a Slavist I was well received, and became friendly with one of the Union's employees who lamented to me that she wished just *one* American would ask to meet "our real Soviet writers. But instead all they want to talk about is Olesha's *Envy* and Mandelshtam and Babel and Pasternak and"—here her tone altered from irritation to outrage—"Gumilev." That was eighteen years ago and suggests that the typical Western scholar was far from the blindered fool or knave Professor van het Reve depicts. I would add that I published in your journal [ENCOUNTER, January 1957] a long account of this trip, almost entirely devoted to "unofficial Russians." I received a great many letters and comments about the article, and not one expressed surprise at or doubt of the existence of the people I wrote about. Contrary to Professor van het Reve's view of our profession, my own feeling is one of membership in a community of scholars who, despite our many disagreements, all know well that the Russia and Russian literature we teach and cherish are quite different from the official versions.

Having said this, I would acknowledge that many advanced students of Soviet literature *are* advised to read transcripts of the Writers' Congresses, and why not? Surely Professor van het Reve would agree that the whole development of Soviet literature, official and unofficial, has been inextricable from the political controls exercised over it, and these transcripts have their political significance. I would wager a good deal, however, that no student in the West for at least twenty years has been directed toward such reading

in the naïve or sinister way suggested in "Dissidents and the West."

I AM NOT an accustomed writer of letters to editors, as the length of this one doubtless makes clear, and I would probably have been content to seethe in silence had it not been for the outrageous injustice of Professor van het Reve's pronouncement that "scholars like Struve and Lettenbauer thought that since nothing was said by official Russia about Mandelshtam and millions of pages were filled with words by and about Sholokhov, Sholokhov must surely be an important writer." About Lettenbauer I am not qualified to comment, but in this statement Struve's work has been shamefully misrepresented. First, let us look at his masterly *Russian Literature under Lenin and Stalin: 1917-1953* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1971). Sholokhov's novels receive slightly *less* treatment, in lines and pages, than Mandelshtam's work. More important, *over half* of Mandelshtam's writings were first published after 1953, and Struve explains in his preface that he has deferred discussion of these works to the sequel to this volume; thus we can expect far more on Mandelshtam there. If Professor van het Reve's judgment of *Russian Literature under Lenin and Stalin* is unswayed by such mundane, factual evidence, perhaps the book's dedication page will give him pause: "I dedicate this book to the memory of OSIP MANDELSHTAM, ISAAC BABEL, BORIS PILNYAK and all other Soviet writers who were 'illegally repressed' and died 'unrehabilitated'."

Professor van het Reve's injustice to Gleb Struve,

continued on p. 96→

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On the Fantasy Left

EARLY THIS MONTH in Washington Heights a young woman slipped away from the intense people who had been crowding her apartment, folded a desperate note into a paper airplane and sailed it out of the living-room window.

The note twisted down through the winter twilight to the feet of a mother and child out for a walk. While the young woman waved frantically from the window, the mother picked up the note and read it:

"Please help to get me out of here. I am being held a prisoner in my own apartment, 9 Cabrini Boulevard, Apt. 4A. They're going to move me soon to some unknown location. I will try to leave some clue in my room if the police get here too late. . . ." The note was signed Alice Weitzman.

By the time the police arrived 40 minutes later, a corner was already being lifted off one of the strangest episodes in the history of the American Left.

WHAT HAS EMERGED is one of the last survivals of the student activism of the 1960s—the steady progression of a committed Far-Left organisation from theoretical writing to repellent descriptions of sadism, from praise of humanism to physical violence against opponents, from hopeful debate about ideas to an embittered conviction that nearly the entire world is engaged in a conspiracy against it.

When the police arrived on Cabrini Boulevard that evening, they found the apartment crowded with well-dressed militants of a Marxist group called the "National Caucus of Labor Committees." Six of the group were arrested and charged with unlawfully imprisoning Miss Weitzman, a member who had been recently expressing scepticism about the organisation's views. The group explained to the police that they had been "staying" with their fellow member because she had been brainwashed and "programmed" by what they described as a cabal including both the Central Intelligence Agency and the K.G.B., the Soviet espionage organisation. The plot, they said, involved assassination of their leader.

Among those arrested, all between the ages of 22 and 30, were the son of a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia Affairs, the daughter of an Episcopalian priest in Connecticut, and the son of the chairman of the electrophysics department at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Other members who emerged later included the daughter of the president of the Sarah Lawrence College and the son of a vice-president of the Ford Foundation.

THE SIX WERE arraigned the next morning and released in \$1,000 bail. The case is still pending in the courts, though Miss Weitzman in the meantime has become a reluctant witness against her former friends. "What they need, you can't provide in a court," she said at one preliminary hearing last week.

This history of the "Labor Committees" is a seven-year story in which the group, now estimated to include between 600 and 1,000 intensely committed members here and in Europe, was formed from elements of Students for a Democratic Society in the waning days of the student movement, and played a leading role in the Columbia University strike in 1968.

THE EARLY PHASE was a calm time of writing and attempting to organise workers for a world revolution. Those who joined it then say they did so because it was an intelligent alternative to the violence of the Weathermen or the inaction of drugs or communes.

In its later period, however, the group has gone on to psychosexual speculation about behavior modification, and still further, last year to savage beatings of—by their own count—at least 40 political opponents, principally members of the Communist party and Black-Power activists.

Labor Committees disrupted the Senate Watergate hearings one day last summer and ran zealous campaigns for local office in New York, Newark and other cities last fall, none of which drew more than 2,000 votes.

NOW THE GROUP is convinced it is the target of a vast conspiracy embracing, among many other elements, the C.I.A., the K.G.B., British intelligence, the New York City Police Department, the Rockefeller family and the anthropology department at Columbia University. This conspiracy, they say, has secretly gotten access to various of their members and has "programmed" them like computers to invent spurious identities and assassinate their leaders.

Behind all the changes is the founder and present chairman of the caucus, a 51-year-old Marxist teacher and theoretician who uses the name Lyn Marcus. Among his current beliefs is that he is the only man in the world capable of "deprogramming" the alleged victims of the brainwashing conspiracy.

Mr Marcus has already subjected several members of the organisation to his techniques, which appear to include hypnotism and deprivation of solid food, and plans to use them on at least several more.

One of those being kept in "isolation" for "deprogramming" is a member who was sent to Bellevue Hospital last week after being found running on the streets screaming "Decontrol me! Decontrol me!" Another, until the police extricated her, was Miss Weitzman in Washington Heights.

MARCUS, whom former colleagues described as a brilliant synthesiser of ideas into coherent systems, believes that unless he breaks the "conspiracy," the world is doomed. "Any of you who say this is a hoax—You're cruds! You're subhuman! You're not

serious!" he said in a speech on January 3rd. "The human race is at stake. Either we win or there is no humanity. That's the way she's cut."

People who have left the movement are astonished at the turn it has taken. Where once members talked of non-violence and human creativity, they now spend their waking hours being harangued in violent speeches studded with accusations that their enemies are forcing them to eat excrement, perform fellatio on pigs and dogs, and submit to homosexual rape.

At their dingy headquarters in a garment-center loft on West 29th Street, Labor Committee youths assigned to "security" sit at the door twirling nunchaku sticks—lethal karate weapons made of two clubs joined by a chain. 20 or 30 red-eyed men and women rush about answering telephones, operating mimeograph machines, or doing chores for Marcus.

Members seem incapable of talking about anything but the brainwashing and the conspiracy. Simple questions often require two-hour answers as proponents marshal fact after fact, some drawn from that day's newspapers, to put forth their theories.

In the last two weeks, the movement has put out 41 separate press releases on brain-washing, and has filled its newspaper, "New Solidarity," with articles like "Injunction Against C.I.A. Mental Genocide."

The members of the group, however, are careful not to go beyond the elements of the conspiracy already outlined by the leader. There seems to be anxious expectation about who will be singled out as a brainwashing victim. Marcus has told them that they are not responsible for their thoughts or actions because of the "programming."

THOUGH A FEW have left the group in disgust over its latest phase, it has managed to hold most of its members, of whom there are about 180 in New York, perhaps 50 in Boston and the rest scattered through 23 cells in the United States and 11 in Europe and Canada.

Total commitment is required for members. Jobs and families are expected to be secondary to party work. Almost all members who are married also have spouses in the movement. Dues are \$24 a month, which pay for publications, rents, propaganda and six salaried officials.

There also seems to be the attraction of a closed but coherent intellectual system in which there is an answer to every question from marital relations to world war; such a system might be difficult to leave for the uncertainties of what the Labor Committee calls bourgeois reality.

MARCUS is a lean, close-cropped man with intense eyes under jutting brows. In a recent four-hour interview he talked virtually non-stop about his life

and his theories. Only once did his reasoned, pipe-smoking professorial air vanish—when, with an explosion of spittle, he lunged with an imaginary knife to show how a C.I.A.-programmed assassin might kill him.

He talked expansively about his career. He was born in Rochester, N.H., in 1922 under the name Lyndon Hermyle La Rouché Jr., he said. He adopted Lyn Marcus as a pen name in his early party work and has used it since. His parents, still alive, are active Quakers. His father was an inventor. He described himself as "an egregious child, I wouldn't say an ugly duckling, but a nasty duckling." He says he attended Northeastern University for a while but was "one of those prodigies" who was ahead of his teachers, and so withdrew.

He was a conscientious objector at the start of World War II, was converted from Kant to Marx by Communist party members.

In 1948 he joined the Socialist Worker Party, a Trotskyite group, where he remained until 1957. At the same time he worked as a management consultant, systems designer and computer programmer.

THE MOVEMENT stressed human creativity as a way of freeing workers from the hold of capitalism. It also attempted with little success, to gain influence in labor unions. One source estimates that only about 2 or 3 per cent of the group's membership has been recruited from the working class.

Marcus increasingly insisted on one-man rule, calling dissenters C.I.A. agents or accusing them of having a "mother problem".

Last March, the Labor Committees announced "Operation Mop-Up" against opponents on the Left; through the summer the party paper gloatingly described how many had been "sent to the hospital" after clashes. Previously the group had shunned violence as "politically stupid."

At the same time, Marcus was developing a theory of psychology to go along with his Marxist economics, which he taught in adult education courses at the New School for Social Research. Among his many ideas on the subject are that most women are lesbians, and that women marry men to hurt them.

THE OTHER DAY two people who had left the Labor Committees and were speaking harshly of it were asked how they could have stayed so long in a movement they considered corrupted. One thought a while and said:

"Because we had no place else to go."

Paul L. Montgomery
in the NEW YORK TIMES

continued from p. 93

however, is far more shocking than the careless distortion of his work as a literary historian. After Mandelshtam was silenced, then killed, the first edition of his works to be published was produced by the Chekhov Publishing House in New York, edited by Struve and Boris Filippov. (A tattered typescript of this volume was the most treasured possession of a Soviet friend I met in 1963.) Through the 1960s Struve continued tirelessly his work on Mandelshtam, obtaining and authenticating newly discovered poems as they began to come out of (not, of course, *in*) the Soviet Union, so that by 1964 he and Filippov brought out a two-volume Mandelshtam. And still the labour continued, producing a subsequent three-volume edition. Wherever one goes, in the West or in Eastern Europe, if people read Mandelshtam's poetry it is the Struve-Filippov editions they read, and most readers I've met have been aware of the monumental expenditure of time, energy, literary discrimination and unswerving devotion which produced these books—scholarly editions, prepared without access to archives or Soviet libraries, without the possibility of visits to the USSR or open correspondence.

Certainly lovers of Mandelshtam in the Soviet Union are aware of Struve's achievement. Although I was acquainted with a good many "unofficial Russians" I knew only two of the "famous" dissidents. Both of them mentioned to me, spontaneously, only one Western Slavist, Gleb Struve. Both had managed to read his *Soviet Russian Literature* and praised it as the best history of their literature in any language. About his editions of Gumilev, Cvetaeva, Akhmatova and Mandelshtam they spoke with a gratitude which I can only describe as rapturous.

Western Slavists, can, I believe, bear up under the misrepresentation of our work and attitudes in "Dissidents and the West", for, after all, we are used to misrepresentation—though usually from other sources. But I think Professor van der Reve owes Professor Struve an apology, and I hope that he will make it in the pages of your journal.

P.S. After recovering from those first five paragraphs, I read the rest of "Dissidents and the West" and found it admirable.

KATHRYN B. FEUER

University of Toronto

AUTHORS

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Joseph Epstein is a young American writer. He has contributed to the *New York Review of Books*, *Commentary*, and other journals, and is at present teaching at Northwestern University....

Julius Gould is Professor of Sociology at the University of Nottingham, and has been Visiting Professor at Berkeley and Cornell. His Comte Memorial Lecture, *The Rational Society*, was published by Athlone Press in 1972....

Gerhard Prause is an editor of *Die Zeit* in Hamburg....

Alexander Walker is Film Critic of the *Evening Standard*. His book, *Hollywood, England*, will be published by Michael Joseph later this year....

Peter Schmid is an editor of *Die Weltwoche*, Zurich, and a frequent contributor to ENCOUNTER. His articles include "Letter from Damascus", and "Letter from Morocco" (April & March 1974)....

Elie Kedourie is Professor of Politics at the London School of Economics and Editor of

Middle Eastern Studies. Among his books are *Nationalism* (1960), *The Chatham House Version* (1970), and *Nationalism in Asia and Africa* (1971). The title essay of *Arabic Political Memoirs*, a collection which Frank Cass will publish later this year, appeared in ENCOUNTER's November 1972 issue....

William M. Lamont is Reader in History and Education at the University of Sussex. He is the author of *Marginal Prynne* (1963) and *Godly Rule 1603-60* (Macmillan, 1969), and editor of *The Realities of Teaching History; Beginnings* (Sussex University Press, 1972)....

Kenneth Hudson has taught at the universities of Bath and Bristol, and was a producer and industrial correspondent for the BBC for twelve years. His pioneering study, *Industrial Archaeology*, appeared in 1963; his other books include *A Survey of the Industrial Archaeology of Southern England* (David & Charles, 1965), and *Industrial Archaeology of Europe* (Adams & Dart, 1970), to be followed by works on the industrial past of America and Europe (1974-75) Thames & Hudson....

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Max Beloff is Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, University of Oxford. His most recent book is *The Intellectual in Politics and Other Essays* (Weidenfeld, 1972).

Burgundy

NEW WHINE, OLD BOTTLES: in Burgundy, wine growers are referring to the investigation in Bordeaux into dishonest labelling of wines as "the Watergrape scandal."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

USE AND ABUSE OF ENGLISH: *All pedants have their favourite pedantries and hates [writes S. W. Johnson, Headmaster, Hulme Grammar School in Lancashire]. I find particularly painful the failure to preserve distinctions: "due to" and "owing to" "contemporary" and "modern" "like" and "as" "less than" and "fewer than" "uninterested" and "disinterested" "economical" and "economic". In Lord Reith's day the BBC set and maintained standards in pronunciation and sentence construction; now that grammar and syntax are discredited, the "newscasters", "DJs" and cub reporters maim the language by the hour.*

This is, I fear, a deeper matter than your columns have so far suggested. We are faced, in fact, with three related problems.

First, we have mass illiteracy. Secondly, we have a lunatic theory of education which asserts that spelling, punctuation and correct usage are of no account. Thirdly, we have a problem of social attitudes. In the present craving for equality it is regarded by many of the young as élitist to use the Queen's English with discrimination, and paternalistic to express concern. Some of our young intellectuals, in the words of F. L. Lucas, "think like pedants and write like butchers".

This is not a question of demanding "bastard and stunted English up with which" Churchill would not put, but a decent respect for the shades and nuances which give our language its peculiar richness.

THE TIMES

Washington

AMERICAN ALLITERATIVE: His Horatio Alger career had come to a police-blotter ending, but Spiro Agnew left one lasting monument on the national political scene: some of the most memorable billingsgate in modern oratory.

As the Administration's designated "cutting edge," he sallied forth to do battle with "troglodytic leftists," "radic-libs," "Spock-marked" kids and "self-appointed élitists." But according to one who honed some of the hyperbole, he also retained a keen sense of irony. "As we came into San Diego in 1970," wrote former speech-writer William Safire last week, Agnew "noted how the reporters were picking up his alliterative phrases; so he asked his writers to come up with the biggest, self-mocking whopper we could think of. We gave him a choice of 'hopeless, hysterical hypochondriacs of history,' and 'nattering nabobs of negativism.' The Vice-

President laughed, said, 'Hell, let's use both,' and —tongue in cheek—sailed them into the political language."

TIME MAGAZINE

New York

LIBRARY BOOKED: *The New York State community of Orangetown was without a public library yesterday. The Library was evicted and workmen removed the 20,000 books and shelves to a warehouse, because no rent has been paid since the library moved into new quarters six months ago.*

Municipal officials have refused to meet the rent bill, claiming that the library trustees were never authorised to sign the lease in the first place.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

FOOT IN IT: The Prime Minister used a football [soccer] analogy to indicate his style of government. He saw himself, he said, as a deep-lying half-back feeding the ball to his forwards. There was a slight retraction here, for apparently he first of all used the word "strikers" for the chaps who would score the goals.

TIMES/TELEGRAPH

Paris

FOUR-LETTER WORDS: *When labor movements in the Common Market countries voted to set up a regional labor organization, little noted or even reported at the time was a vote taken then [Arnold Beichman writes].*

Since almost all of the European unions were affiliates of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (with headquarters in Brussels), it was expected that the organization should be called the European Free Trade Union Confederation. Instead, the name proposed omitted the word "free." A move to adopt that version was passed by an 11-5 vote, and the present regional organization is called the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

It calls for little intuition to understand the subtle politics involved in this name game. An organization of West European labor unions with the word "free" in its title might reasonably have expected to bar so-called labor unions in totalitarian countries from affiliation. Since British trade union leaders at the meeting were committed to forging a united European labor organization, the word "free" in the organizational title would have been regarded as provocative by Shelepin (Russian labor commissar and ex-KGB chief) and, therefore, embarrassing to the British and their Continental allies who want Russian and East European affiliation.

Are the issues dealt with little more than dull semantics? What difference does it make if Luxembourg is for or against the word "free"?

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Oxford